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GARDENS ILLUSTRATED

THE PLANT ISSUE

PLANTING IDEAS *from the designers' favourite nursery*

A SCOTTISH GARDEN *inspired by South African plants*

How to start **a garden sketchbook**

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A garden in 120 annuals

HOW SARAH RAVEN *created Perch Hill*

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EDITOR'S LETTER

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In the *Gardens Illustrated* Plant Special we venture far and wide, from the shores of Wester Ross in northwest Scotland to Cornwall's cliffs and valleys on Britain's southernmost tip.

Durnamuck in the Scottish Highlands is the definition of a garden on the edge of a landscape. Will Soos and Sue Pomeroy who met while working at the botanic garden of Inverewe – Will was responsible for the walled garden and Sue worked as a propagator – bought a croft there to build a home. Durnamuck benefits from the warmth of the Gulf Stream and, inspired by their travels in Chile and South Africa, Will and Sue have made an incredible garden using plants that are unseen in colder parts of the UK. Watsonias, crocosmias, dieramas, restios and grasses grow cheek-by-jowl. It's a beautiful garden in an austere mountainscape.

Near Penzance, Lower Kenneggy Nurseries specialises in plants for Britain's extensive coastline, with an emphasis on the south coast. It's a true plantsman's nursery with the unusual as well as the more commonplace. Their philosophy is that it is better to grow a few things and grow them well. Matthew Reese visits in search of new favourites.

Designer Andy Sturgeon will headline the 2019 RHS Chelsea Flower Show with a garden that is inspired by rock formations witnessed on an Australian beach, with burnt timber sculpture on a geological scale and woodland planting. A garden designer and gardener, Andy studied interior landscape at horticultural college, a course that he says was 'promptly axed' and he claims he owes much of his success to books. He shares the titles that mean the most to him, and that he considers the most useful.

In every issue of *Gardens Illustrated* leading plantsmen recommend the best plants to grow each month. The *Gardens Illustrated* 2019 calendar that comes with this issue is a selection of our favourites to enjoy for the year ahead.

I hope you enjoy the issue,

Lucy Bellamy

LUCY BELLAMY, EDITOR

JASON INGRAM

Fuchsia x bacillaris is one of the unusual plants found at Lower Kenneggy Nurseries, page 74

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Graham offers a borders masterclass, page 36. *"The past 20 years have been spent developing Marchants Hardy Plants, designing a garden, and growing and painting with the plants I love."*

SARAH CRAMER SHIELDS

LARA CALL GASTINGER
Lara illustrates our nature journal feature, page 52 *"My own journal distils a lifetime's observations of the plants around me into each week of the year."*

MARTIN STOTT
Martin discusses rose scent with perfumier Robert Calkin, page 44. *"Robert's vocabulary for describing and discerning different rose scents will take your appreciation of rose blooms to a new level."*

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James lives in the South of France where he runs Scape Design with his wife Helen, specialising in low-maintenance and dry gardens. He is a fervent advocate for creating sustainable landscapes. The winner of four Chelsea Gold medals, he was awarded Best in Show in 2017.

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Anna's books include her bestseller *The Tulip* and most recently *Landskipping*. For 30 years she was *The Independent*'s gardening correspondent. In 2000 the RHS awarded her the Veitch Memorial Medal. She lives and gardens in Dorset.

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SYNDICATION & LICENSING

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Standard subscription rates: UK £64.87 per annum; Eire and Europe £74.87 for 13 issues; rest of the world £79.87 for 13 issues. Distribution Frontline, Peterborough. US distribution Source IPD/Speedimpex. Email intlquery@seymour.co.uk Printed in the UK by William Gibbons Ltd. *Gardens Illustrated* (ISSN 0968-8920) (USPS 015-608) is published 13 times a year (monthly with a Special issue in December) by Immediate Media Company Bristol, 2nd Floor, Tower House, Fairfax St, Bristol BS1 3BN, UK. Distributed in the USA by Circulation Specialists, LLC, 2 Corporate Drive, Ste. 945, Shelton, CT 06484. Periodical postage paid at Shelton, CT and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Gardens Illustrated*, PO Box 37495, Boone, IA 50037-0495. Unsolicited manuscripts, artwork or transparencies are accepted on the understanding that the publishers incur no liability for their storage or return. The contents of this magazine are fully protected by copyright and may not be reproduced without permission. The *Gardens Illustrated* cover is printed on 250gsm Respecta Gloss produced in Belgium by Burgo; the china clay filler is supplied from the UK. The Immediate Media Company Limited is working to ensure that all of its paper is sourced from well-managed forests. This magazine can be recycled for use in newspapers and packaging. Please remove any gifts, samples or wrapping and dispose of it at your local collection point. All prices are correct at time of going to press.

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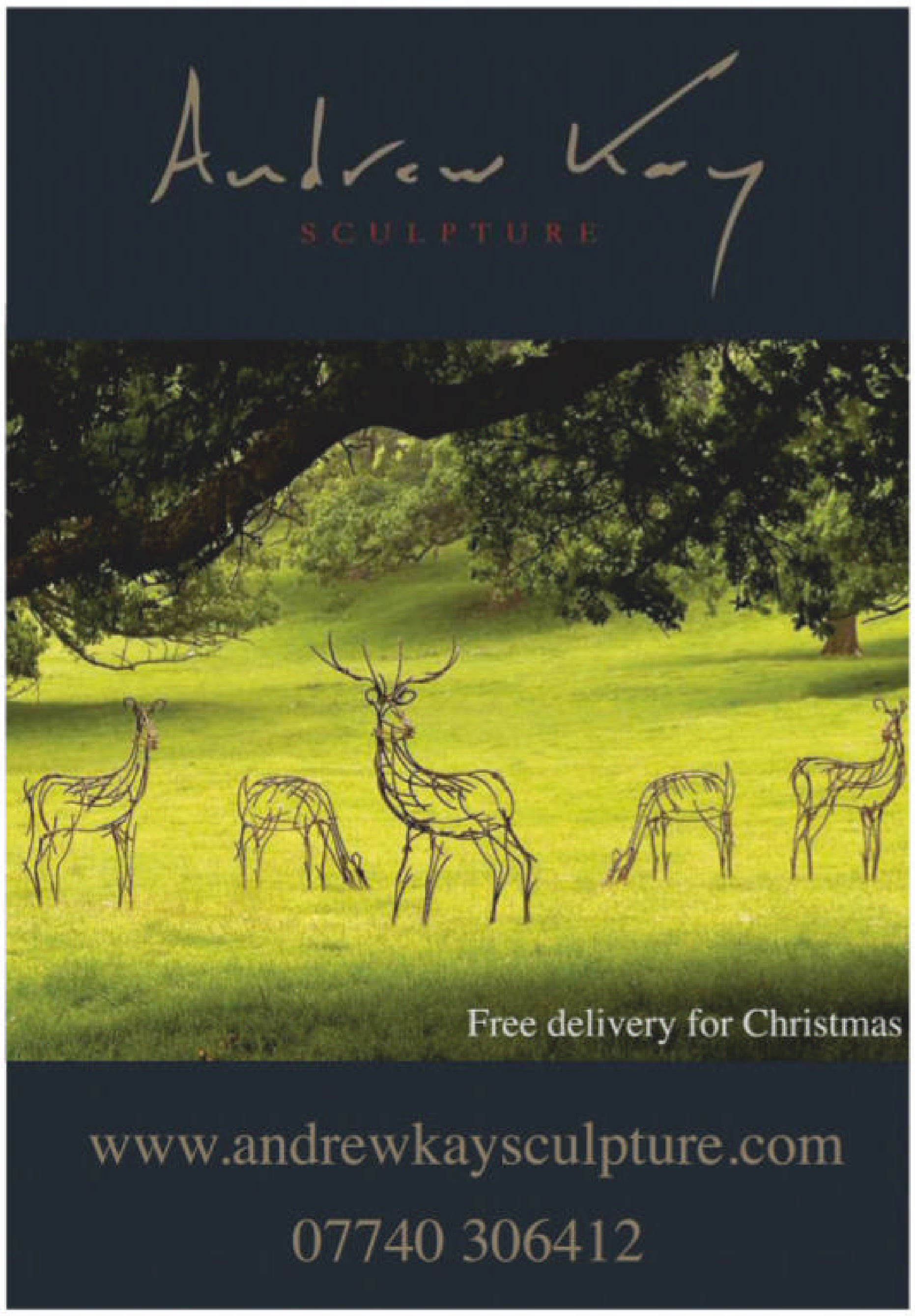
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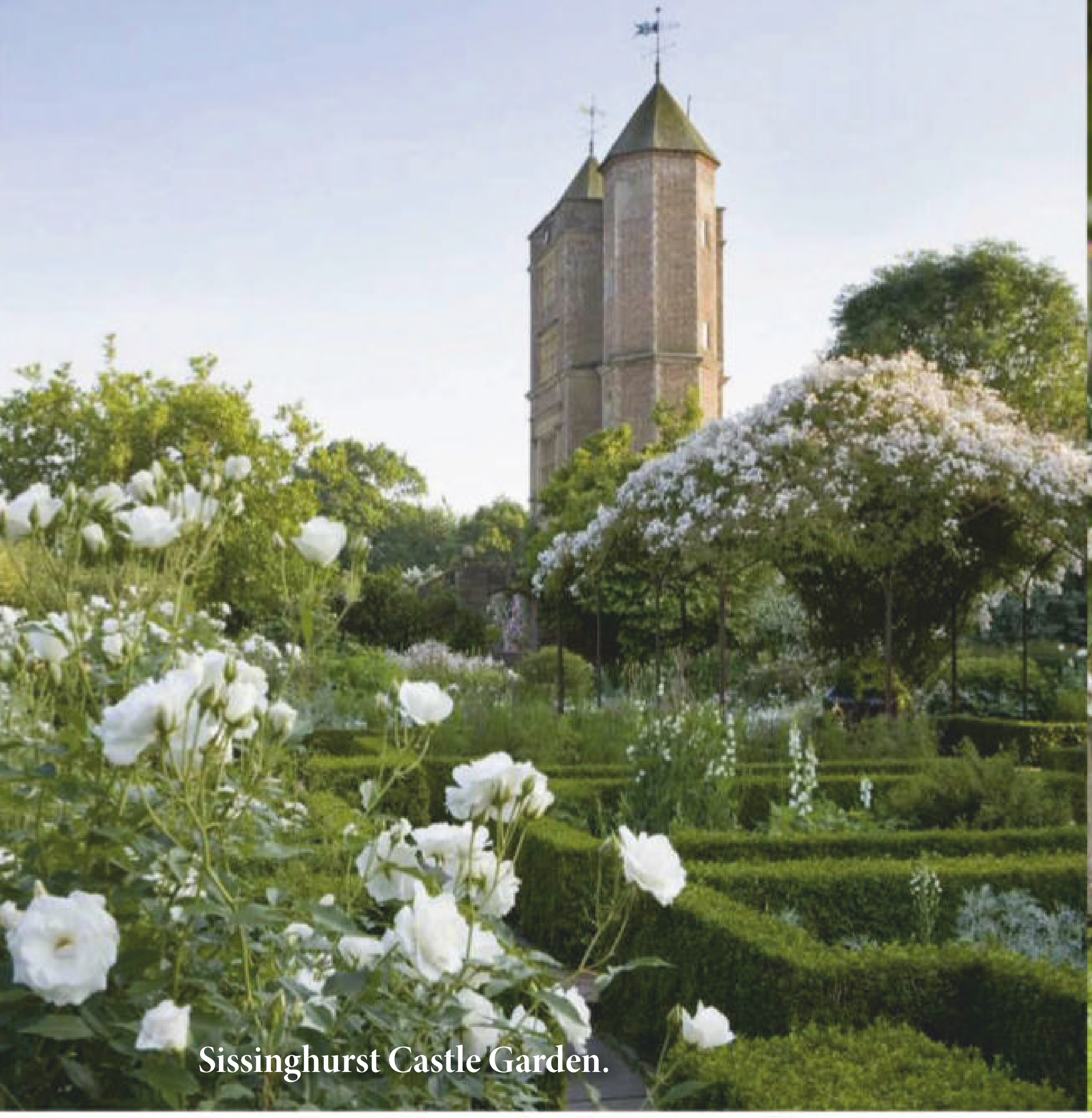
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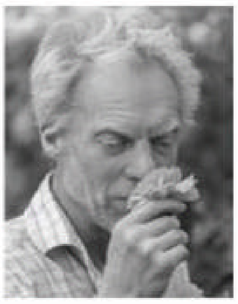
TOUR LEADER

Michael Marriott has worked at David Austin Roses, designing and advising, for the past 30 years. He is an expert on all matters relating to roses, from the extensive range of cultivars and types to successful growing.

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TUTOR
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This is a busy time of year and Fergus's talk will look at planning and preparation, including creating a timetable, composting and soil preparation, weeding, thinning out of self-sowers, working off of boards, splitting, dividing and planting self-sowers, timing of seed sowing and pricking out, choosing annuals for adding to the display, plus Fergus will include a handy outline of when and how to prune. All in all this is a fantastic opportunity to learn best practice techniques from one of the country's most highly regarded gardeners.

Along with Fergus's talk, you'll also enjoy a home-cooked lunch from Dixter's vegetable gardener and cook Aaron Bertelsen and have the opportunity to visit the plant nursery with a 10 per cent discount voucher.

EVENT DETAILS

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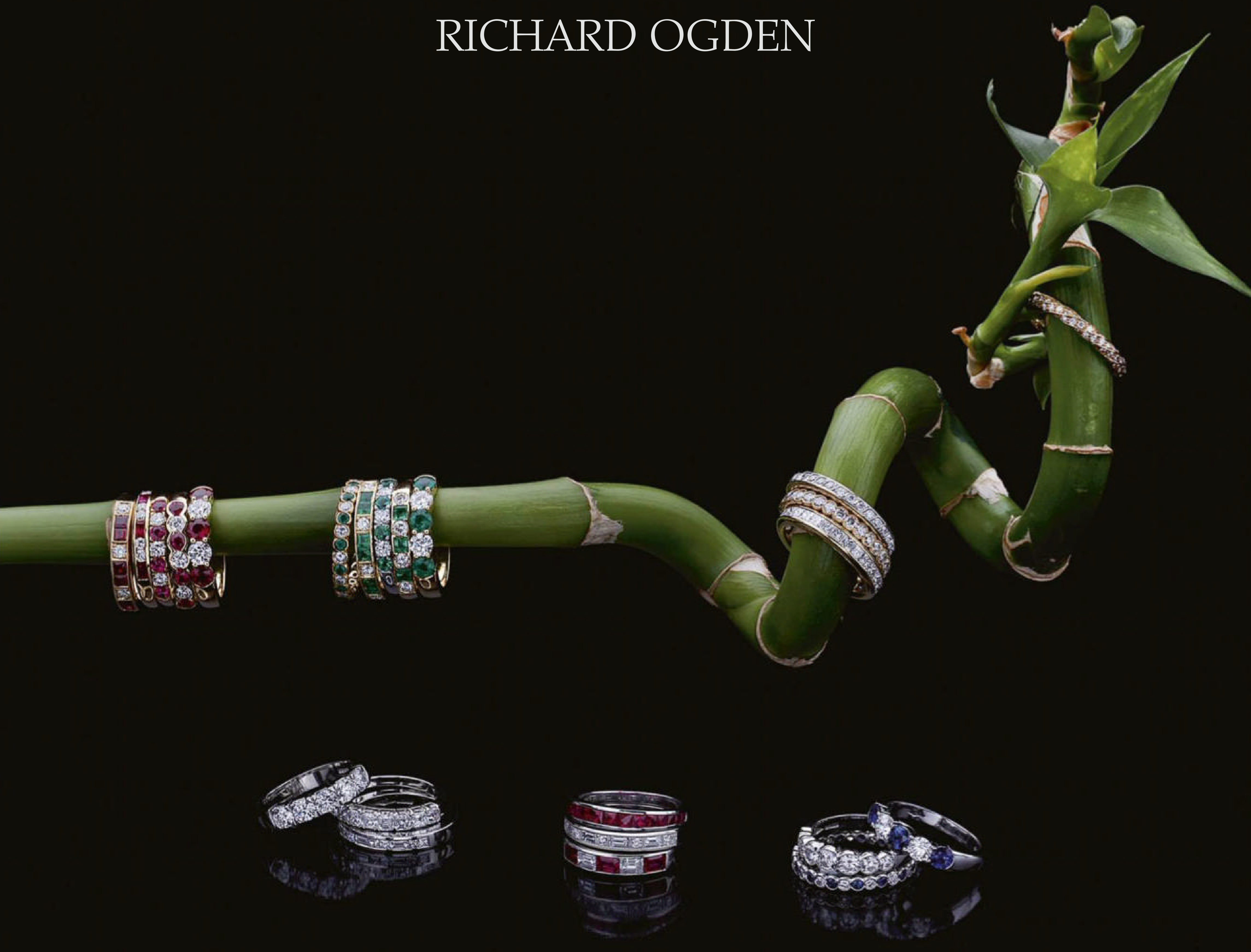

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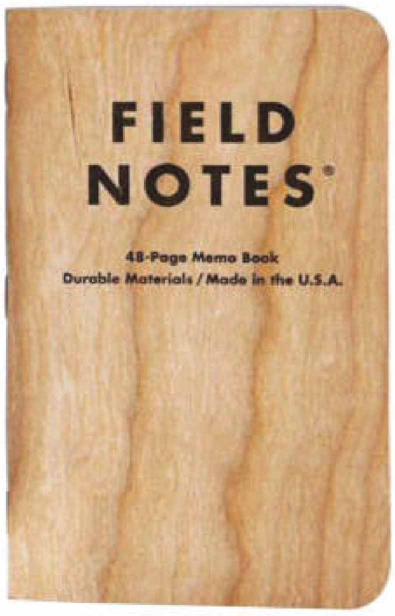
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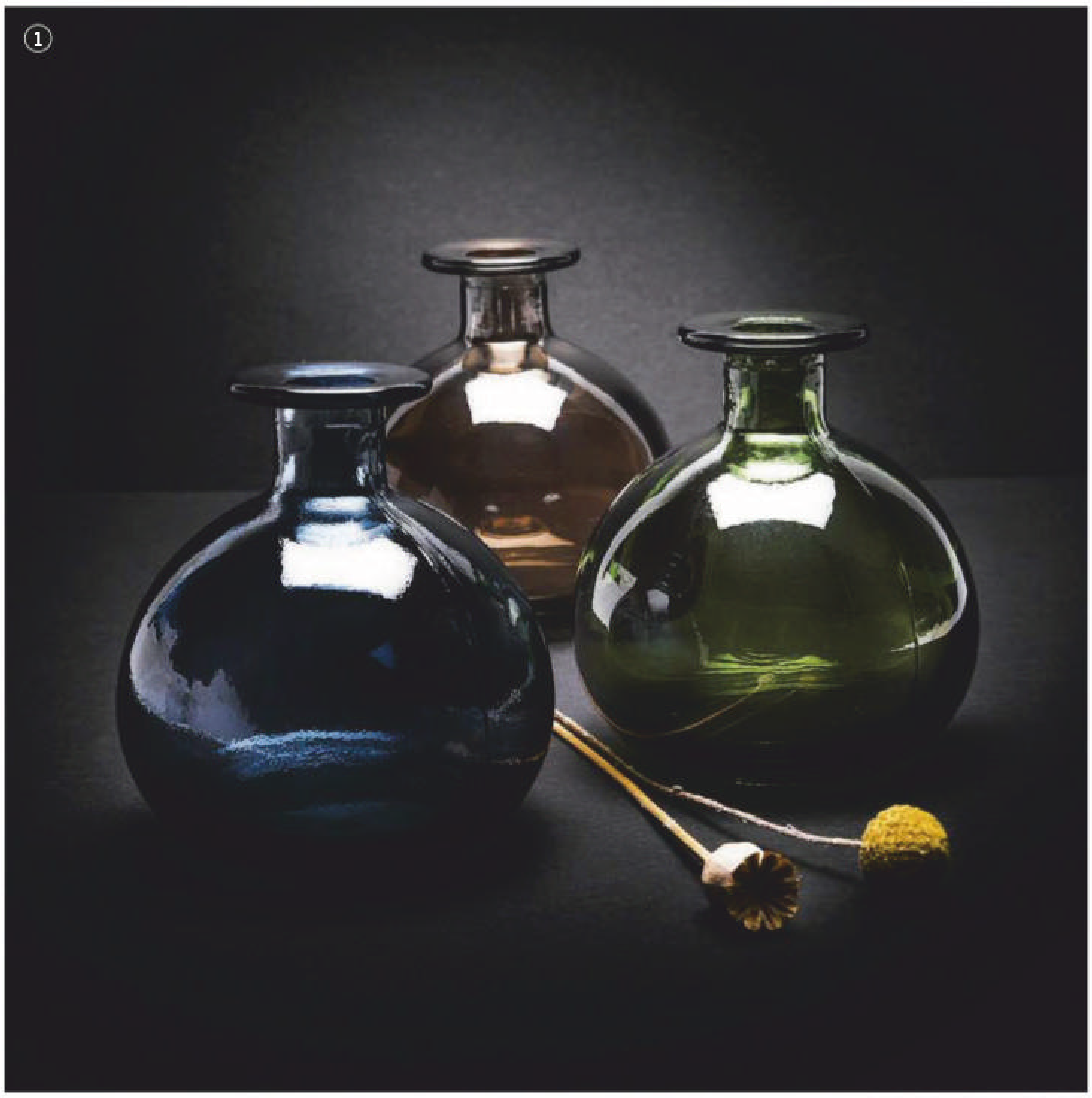

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WHAT'S IN A NAME?

WORDS KEN THOMPSON

Botanical plant names can be confusing, especially as they always seem to be changing, but learning the rules behind plant-naming conventions can be key to understanding more about plants' origins and their preferred growing conditions. If Botanical Latin is all Greek to you (and to be honest quite a lot of it is) then let us help you sort your *sylvatica* from your *forrestii*

Formal plant classification is a hierarchical system with many levels, but the most important of those levels for gardeners, the one we use every day, is the genus (plural genera). Genera are basically distinct, recognisable kinds of plant, and in many cases the genus name is also the common name. Whenever you talk about rhododendron, iris, crocus, wisteria, camellia and penstemon, for example, you're using Botanical Latin names of genera. All they need to become Botanical Latin, which by the way also includes a fair bit of Greek, is italicising and a capital letter, for example *Rhododendron*.

The only other two levels of the botanical hierarchy that gardeners normally need are the next one up (family), and the next one down (species). The rule is that family names are always made up by adding '-aceae' to the genus name on which the family name is based; for example *Iris* + aceae = Iridaceae (with an extra 'd' to make it pronounceable). Species fit inside genera, just as genera fit within families. Within the genus *Viburnum*, for example, are several species well-known to gardeners, including *Viburnum davidii*. In a list like this, or anywhere the genus is understood, it is usually shortened to its initial, for example, *V. davidii.* Garden plants may also be hybrids of two species, in which case the name may be the two specific names separated by 'x'. More often hybrids are given a new specific name, prefixed by 'x' to show it is a hybrid. So the hybrid of *V. farreri* and *V. grandiflorum* is called *V.* x *bodnantense*.

Garden plants are often cultivated varieties ('cultivars') selected for a particular feature, such as vigour, hardiness or flower shade, for example *V. tinus* 'Eve Price', and hybrids may also have cultivars, such as *V.* x *bodnantense* 'Dawn'. Sometimes, especially in genera that gardeners and breeders have been messing about with for a long time, a cultivar's history is so complex that it can no longer be referred to a species, or even a hybrid, so there's just a genus and cultivar name, as in *Rosa* 'Fragrant Delight'.

What, if anything, do all these names actually mean? Many genus names are just, well, names, they don't really mean anything – they are just what the plant has always been called, often since Roman times. *Salvia*, *Malus* and *Rosa*, for example, are what the Romans called sage, apple and various roses. Other genera may commemorate botanists or politicians, for example *Fuchsia* (Leonard Fuchs, a 16th-century German botanist – remembering this, by the way, will help you to spell it correctly), *Grevillea* (Charles Francis Greville, an 18th-century British politician and one of the founders of the Horticultural Society of London that later became the RHS) and *Gunnera* (Johann Ernst Gunnerus, an 18th-century Norwegian bishop and amateur botanist). Some generic names are descriptive, but often take some decoding; *Galanthus*, for example, is Greek for milk-flower, *Aquilegia* is from *aquila*, Latin for eagle (the spurred petals are supposed to resemble an eagle's talons), and *Gypsophila* is from the Greek for chalk-lover, from a preference for chalky soils.

Species names, like genera, sometimes commemorate famous people. For example, *Berberis darwinii, Rhododendron forrestii* and *Acer davidii* are named for Charles Darwin and the plant hunters George Forrest and Jean Pierre Armand David respectively.

Some useful indicators of habitat include *sylvatica* (of woods or forests) and *palustris* (of bogs or marshes), so plants with these names are likely to do well in shade (*Luzula sylvatica*, woodrush) or wet soil (*Caltha palustris*, marsh marigold). *Armeria maritima* is, ▷

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Clockwise from top left: The genus *Grevillea* was discovered in Australia in the 19th century by the Scottish botanist Robert Brown who named it in honour of one of the founders of the RHS, Charles Francis Greville; **as its name suggests *Armeria maritima*** is a species native to coastal areas of northern Europe; ***Scilla peruviana* is not from Peru**, it's native to Mediterranean areas; **the South African genus *Tulbaghia*** was named by Linnaeus for Ryk Tulbagh, one-time governor of the Dutch Cape Colony who had sent him several plants from the region; **this *Cercidiphyllum japonicum*** is native to Japan, but *Mahonia japonica* is thought to be from Taiwan; **the species name of *Salvia microphylla*** literally means small leaves, although like many Botanical Latin names it's actually from Greek.

TORIE CHUGG; FRANK HECKER / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; JASON INGRAM X3; ANNAÏCK GUITTENY.

▷ of course, from the seaside, *Cymbalaria muralis* grows on walls and *Clematis alpina* really does come from the Alps.

Some specific names are simply straightforward descriptions of the plant itself, as in *Dryas octopetala* (eight petals), *Salvia microphylla* (small leaves) and *Magnolia grandiflora* (big flowers). Colours may be obvious as in *Ribes nigrum* (black, in this case referring to the fruits) or not so obvious – *caerulea* is from the Latin for blue as in *Passiflora caerulea*, *lutea* is yellow as in *Sternbergia lutea*, and *coccineum* is scarlet as in *Embothrium coccineum*.

Two useful species names are *esculentum* (good to eat) and *sativa* (planted or cultivated). So we have *Lycopersicon esculentum* (tomato) and *Lactuca sativa* (lettuce). Many names refer to the country or region of origin, either obviously (*Cercidiphyllum japonicum*, *Wisteria sinensis*, *Hyacinthoides hispanica*) or less so. You need to know that Nootka Sound is in British Columbia to interpret *Xanthocyparis nootkatensis* (although you may have had a better chance of guessing its common name of Alaska cedar when it was still known as *Cupressus nootkatensis*).

DON'T ACCEPT ALL NAMES THAT APPEAR TO INDICATE A PLANT'S ORIGIN AT FACE VALUE

The rules of plant naming are set out in the International Code of Nomenclature for algae, fungi and plants (ICN), the primary aim of which is to avoid confusion by making sure a plant has only one correct name. According to the rule of priority, that name is the first one 'validly published' (usually these days in a scientific journal, or a magazine such as this) since 1 May 1753, which is when Carl Linnaeus started the whole system, giving every plant then known a Latin binomial, that is a genus and species name. Technically, a name is only complete if accompanied by an authority, that is whoever gave the plant its name. Authority names are usually abbreviated, so for example Linnaeus becomes L.

As long as it obeys the (complicated) rules set out in the ICN, a plant's name is entirely up to the person doing the naming. A whopping great tree found in Gabon in 2015, bigger than any of its relatives, was named *Gilbertiodendron maximum*. Commemorating someone famous is always an option; *Nepenthes attenboroughii*, named after the celebrated broadcaster, is a carnivorous pitcher plant discovered in 2009 in the Philippines. A new orchid was recently named *Dendrobium cynthiae* after the Californian orchid grower Cynthia (Cyndy) Hill. The author of the orchid genus *Aa* wanted to make quite sure it always appeared at the top of any alphabetical list. And if you need a new genus and your imagination fails you, well, *Sartidia* is a new grass genus, related to the existing *Aristida*.

A surprising number of the 'new' plants discovered every year come from someone taking a fresh look at old herbarium specimens. Or, these days, looking not at plants as such, but at ▷

Clockwise from top left*:* ***Berberis darwinii* is one of several species** named for Charles Darwin, who discovered it in South America in 1835 during the voyage of HMS *Beagle*; **the *nigrum* in *Ribes nigrum***, better known as blackcurrant, refers to the colour of the berries; **the botanical name of *Caltha palustris*** and its common name of marsh marigold both reflect its preference for marshy ground; **the genus name in *Aquilegia canadensis*** is from the Latin for eagle, the species name refers to its country of origin, namely Canada; ***Acer davidii*, in common with several Chinese** species is named for Jean Pierre Armand David, a French priest and amateur botanist who spent many years as missionary in China; ***Cymbalaria muralis* is a plant**, which as its species name suggests grows on walls.

▷ their DNA. Once upon a time plants were classified on the basis of their appearance, but the similarity of the DNA of two species is a perfect guide to how closely related they are. So, as sequencing DNA gets cheaper and easier, we often find our earlier ideas about classification were not entirely correct – which in turn means some names need to change. *Sedum*, for example, has now been split into several genera, including *Hylotelephium* and *Rhodiola*, as well as *Sedum*, and the Welsh poppy has been taken out of *Meconopsis* and put into *Papaver* (which is actually where Linnaeus had put it in the first place).

> *IF YOU WANT TO BE ABSOLUTELY UNAMBIGUOUS, IT ALWAYS PAYS TO USE THE BOTANICAL NAME*

Can a name ever be rejected? Yes, it can, and breaking the rules is fine if obeying them would be too annoying. Thus, although strict application of the rule of priority would replace *Freesia* by the earlier name *Anomatheca*, the former is officially 'conserved' and the latter rejected.

A final word about common names. If you want to be absolutely unambiguous, it always pays to use the botanical name. But common names have their uses; some are extremely useful in indicating groups of more-or-less related genera, for example brooms, which are found in the genera *Cytisus*, *Genista* and *Spartium*. Some of these groups are so useful that gardeners even write books about them and form societies dedicated to their cultivation, for example heathers (*Calluna*, *Erica*, *Daboecia* and many others). And common names can be useful islands of stability when botanists start monkeying with Latin names. Most *Aster* species are now in *Symphyotrichum*, but you can still call them asters, or indeed Michaelmas daisies.

Don't accept all names that appear to indicate a plant's origin at face value – sometimes the authors of names weren't sure where the plant came from, or the name is simply a mistake. No one is quite sure where *Mahonia japonica* comes from, but it doesn't seem to be Japan, although it has been cultivated there for centuries; our best guess is Taiwan. Although *M. japonica* and *M. bealei* are possibly forms of the same species, and many plants in gardens are hybrids of the two anyway. Sarnia is an old name for Guernsey, so naturally the Guernsey lily is *Nerine sarniensis*, which would be fine if the plant in question weren't a native of South Africa. And the Portuguese squill really is from Portugal, despite its Latin name being *Scilla peruviana*.

You might think it would be someone's job to do something about names like these, but I'm afraid it isn't. There are plenty of reasons why plant names change, but being wrong, misleading or just plain unpronounceable – as in the case of *Paeonia mlokosewitschii*, which was named for Polish botanist Julia Mlokosewitsch – are not among them. ◻

MBP-PLANTS / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; JO WHITWORTH / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; CORA UNK / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; JASON INGRAM; JAN HOLM / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; HEIDI STEWART / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO.

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NORTHERN EXPOSURE

SCENT AND SENSIBILITY

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The Outsider

Horticulturist Hannah Gardner heads to Northern Cyprus in search of ox-blood red Tulipa cypria*, the island's elusive national flower*

WORDS **HANNAH GARDNER** ILLUSTRATION **ALICE PATTULLO**

The varied and dramatic landscapes of Northern Cyprus are renowned in the botanical world for an astonishing variety of flora. The showy lily family is well represented with *Fritillaria persica*, *Fritillaria acmopetala* and tulips growing wild here. You'll find spectacular limestone mountains, ancient olive and citrus groves, and a superb unspoilt coastline, with just a few scattered towns and villages along the way. Since the partition of Cyprus in 1974, Northern Cyprus has remained largely isolated (the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus is still recognised only by Turkey). It feels authentic and retro, like a last undeveloped corner of the Mediterranean. Local initiatives seek to protect nature's abundance by controlling overgrazing and celebrating the endemic island flora.

Inspiration for the trip

Since partition, the island's capital Nicosia has also been divided and the city's hebarium is inaccessible from Northern Cyprus. To fill this gap a new hebarium, housed in the main building of the Alevkaya Forestry Station, was founded in 1989 by the British Botanist Dr Deryck Viney.

The Alevkaya Herbarium holds nearly 1,250 specimens, including, taped on to thick, faded cartridge paper, the fragile specimen sheet for Cyprus's national flower, the allusive dark ox-blood *Tulipa cypria*.

When to go

The wildflowers are best in March and April. The scorching sun desiccates the vegetation in summer, while autumn rain brings a fresh flush of flowers lasting well into the winter months.

Where to go

Tulipa cypria is a rare Cyprus endemic that flowers between March and April. Treasured populations are to be found in Northern Cyprus. A good place to start is near Koruçam. In March the nearby village Tepebasi holds an annual Tulip festival when guided botanical tours are available and festivities plentiful. Finding these slender feral beauties growing wild among the filagree foliage of giant fennel and scrub gave me goose pimples and left a lasting impression. Close relative *Tulipa agenensis* is widespread throughout the eastern Mediterranean. Common in Northern Cyprus it forms impressive displays on cultivated land. A bright scarlet with a prominent yellow blotch it is easily distinguished from its sultry cousin. Edible crown daisies, *Glebionis coronaria,* are also flowering at this time, draping the dusty hills with bright sheets of colour.

Continuing west to the lower northern foothills of the Kyrenia Mountains there are extensive areas of shrubby maquis. It is here you'll find the honed-smooth, red-barked limbs of the eastern strawberry tree (*Arbutus andrachne*), shrubby prickly oak (*Quercus coccifera*) and pungent *Pistacia terebinthus*. Fiery yellow beacons of scented broom (*Calicotome villosa*) punctuate the cultivated landscape of carob trees, olive groves and in spring the colourful and varied *Ranunculus asiaticus*.

Increasing in altitude the forests here are mainly Calabrian pine (*Pinus brutia*) and cypress, the forest floor an ornate carpet of orchids in spring, among them the sculptural mauve flowers of *Orchis anatolica*, the confident shaggy Italian orchid (*Orchis italica*) and a little later the endemic bee orchid *Ophrys kotschyi*.

The most picturesque route for driving to the Alevkaya Herbarium is to follow the twisting unmade ridge road that joins the Girne to Gazimagusa mountain road. The Herbarium, which is open daily (8am-4pm), has a picnic area shaded by pine trees and a small restaurant that provides delicious local food. Walking into the hills in autumn you'll find the delicate lilac autumn squill (*Scilla autumnalis*) hastily populates open ground with occasional groups of fragrant pale *Narcissus serotinus* scenting the breeze.

Stretching towards mainland Turkey the wonderful Karpaz Peninsula is populated by roaming herds of wild donkeys. The vegetation is mostly garigue, and empty sandy beaches that have their own unique flora including the spectacular white beach lily, *Pancratium maritimum*, that flowers in the autumn. *Tulipa cypria* can also be found here near Avtepe where the villagers also honour the endemic tulip with another annual festival in spring.

Plants to grow at home

The wild red tulips discussed here are sadly neither available nor easy to grow in cultivation. However, there is a beguiling scarlet species tulip from the northern coast of Turkey that, while extinct in the wild (a cautionary tale of over collection during the late 19th century), is thriving in cultivation. *Tulipa sprengeri* is the latest of the species tulips to flower. With strong narrow stems of 30-40cm, its habit is graceful and understated, the currant-red flowers opening in the sunshine of early May. *Tulipa sprengeri* is happy in partial shade but needs some sun for its flowers to open fully. In a garden setting it will naturalise and seed if the seedheads are left on the plant to ripen over the summer months. I grow them in areas of unmown grass alongside *Tulipa acuminata* and *Camassia*. The small bulbs work their way deep into the fertile but free-draining soil, avoiding predation by squirrels, their group steadily increasing – although patience is required as you have a four-year wait from seedling to flower. ◻

Guides and maps

Walking in Cyprus: 44 Walks in the South and the North by Nike Werstroh and Jacint Mig (Cicerone, 2017).

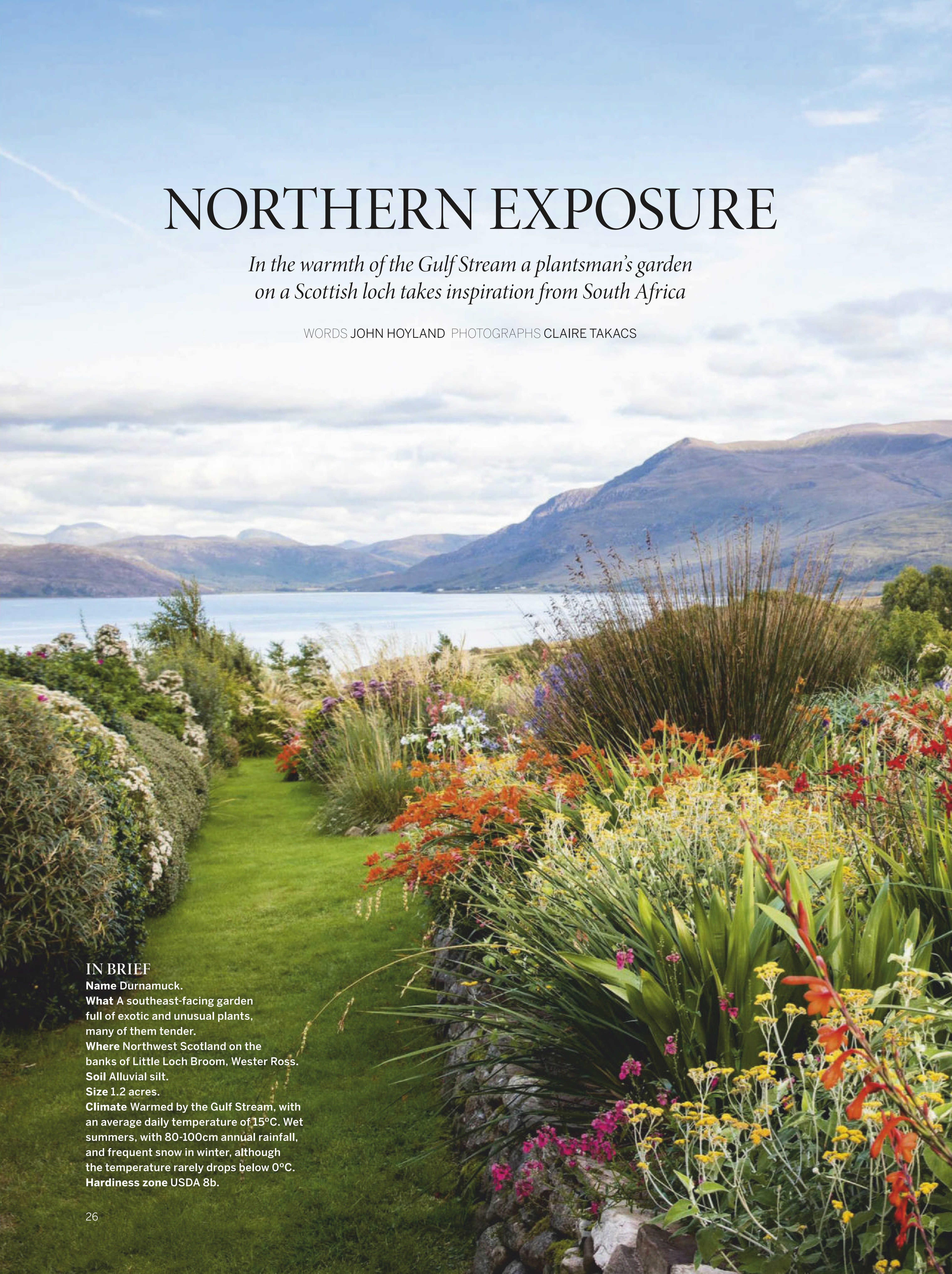
Wild Flowers of Cyprus by George Sfikas (Efstathiadis, 1992).

Where to stay

TasEv Guesthouse Müftü Ziyai Efendi Sokak 33, Leftkosa.2369, Cyprus. Tel +90 542 862 1379, tasevlefkosa.com
An old stone townhouse in Turkish northern Nicosia, also known as Leftkosa.

RevakliEv Guesthouse
Karpaz Anayolu, Rizokarpaso, 8999. Cyprus. Tel + 90 542 874 21 60, revakliev.com
A romantic pension on the Karpaz Peninsula.

Pancratiu Maritium
Ophrys Kotschyi
Orchis Anatolica
TULIPA CYPRIA



NORTHERN EXPOSURE

In the warmth of the Gulf Stream a plantsman's garden on a Scottish loch takes inspiration from South Africa

WORDS JOHN HOYLAND PHOTOGRAPHS CLAIRE TAKACS

IN BRIEF

Name Durnamuck.
What A southeast-facing garden full of exotic and unusual plants, many of them tender.
Where Northwest Scotland on the banks of Little Loch Broom, Wester Ross.
Soil Alluvial silt.
Size 1.2 acres.
Climate Warmed by the Gulf Stream, with an average daily temperature of 15°C. Wet summers, with 80-100cm annual rainfall, and frequent snow in winter, although the temperature rarely drops below 0°C.
Hardiness zone USDA 8b.

Colourful watsonias, geraniums, crocosmias and agapanthus provide a burst of colour that is in stark contrast to the austere Highland peaks as they sweep down toward the shore of Little Loch Broom.

INSPIRATION CAME FROM TRAVELS IN CHILE AND SOUTH AFRICA AS WELL AS COLLECTIONS AT NEARBY INVEREWE BOTANICAL GARDEN

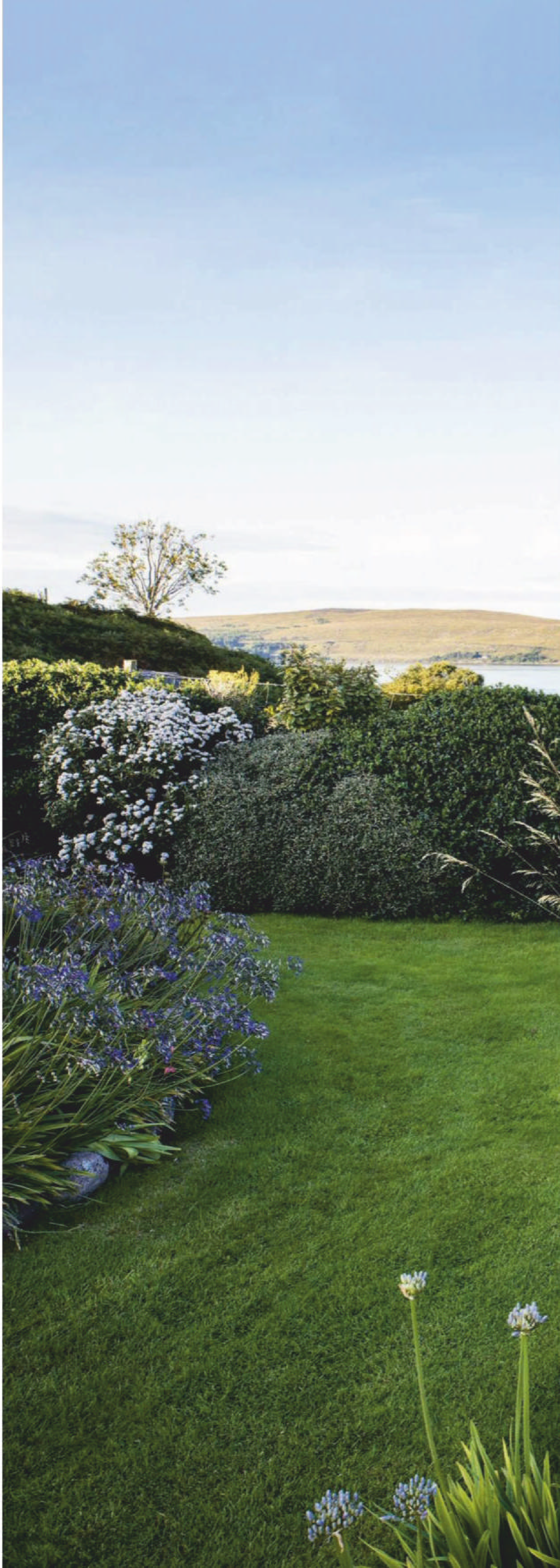
The austere landscape of the northwest Scottish Highlands, and the gentle but insistent rain, give no hint of the shining jewel of a garden that I am about to discover in the hamlet of Durnamuck, in Wester Ross. But as I descend an isolated track that winds around occasional crofts towards Little Loch Broom, I glimpse, sparkling in the distance, the dazzling garden that Will Soos and Sue Pomeroy have created on the loch shore.

The couple met while they both working nearby at the National Trust for Scotland's Inverewe Garden, where Will was responsible for the spectacular walled garden and Sue focused on plant propagation. Like Durnamuck, Inverewe is caressed by the Gulf Stream, allowing plants unseen in colder parts of Britain to flourish. Inverewe's plant collections, together with extensive travels in Chile and South Africa, nurtured the couple's interest in plants from the southern hemisphere.

When Will and Sue bought the croft to make a home they were confident that the mild climate would be perfect for the plants that they wanted to grow. They built the house themselves in 2009, often working on site in the early morning and late evening, time sandwiched between long, hard days in their gardening jobs. The garden began with a deer fence – a must in the Highlands – followed by the construction of a series of narrow, stone-edged ditches to drain excess water down to the sea.

As well as dealing with the high rainfall of the area, Will and Sue knew that they would need to protect their collection of plants from strong winds. On the windward side of the garden they planted a line of willow and beside that a hedge of mixed native species. For the leeward side they chose a row of evergreen *Olearia* species. A favourite of Sue's, these are a group of shrubs from New Zealand that enjoy the mild and wet climate, growing quickly to provide shelter and giving the garden a sense of maturity. They have now been pruned to echo the line of the distant mountains.

At the front of the house I am welcomed by narrow, raised, stone beds crammed with plants from New Zealand ▷



Right On the loch side of the garden evergreen *Olearia* shrubs have been planted at the perimeter of the garden to screen the deer fence. So that the shrubs do not obscure the view they are clipped low, their rounded hummocks echoing the distant hills. Because of the high rainfall and mild weather, growth is lush and plants that are often slow to spread, such as *Hylotelephium spectabile* and the agapanthus on the left, soon form large colonies.

THE PLACE IS CRAMMED WITH UNUSUAL PLANTS, BUT DOESN'T HAVE THE DRY AND SERIOUS ATMOSPHERE OF MANY ENTHUSIASTS' GARDENS

▷ and South Africa. Fat glossy leaves of the Chatham Island forget-me-not, *Myosotidium hortensia*, neighbour the delicate silver spears of *Celmisia semicordata*. Tumbling among the stones is the silver foliage of *Rhodanthemum hosmariense*, the last of its daisy-like flowers a testament to the wonderful sight it would have made earlier in the year. My progress through the garden is slow, because every plant captures my interest, and every plant looks healthy and happy. Although the place is crammed with unusual plants, it doesn't have the dry and serious atmosphere often found in plant enthusiasts' gardens.

I turn the corner at the side of the house and what a view. Dazzlingly bright flowers – cultivars of *Agapanthus*, *Crocosmia*, *Watsonia*, *Rudbeckia* and *Sanguisorba* – tumble down towards a sober native meadow and the loch, echoing the contours of the mountains that sweep steeply down to the sea.

There was no design on paper. The garden grew from talking about what was needed, how to deal with the rain and the wind, and how to find space for all the plants Will and Sue had collected. When laying out the garden the surrounding landscape was always the focus, and the plants always lead the eye towards the view.

To the front of the house are two curved beds, filled with plants, that enclose a lawn. The planted areas are raised above soil level by low walls created with rocks dug from their land ▷

To continue turn to page 34

Clockwise from top left

The muted shades of grasses and restios echo the tones of the nearby hills. Grasses are prized for their ability to dance in the wind without being battered down. In the background are the fronds of *Chionochloa conspicua* while in the centre its cousin, *Chionochloa rubra*, is surrounded by a bright-yellow crocosmia.

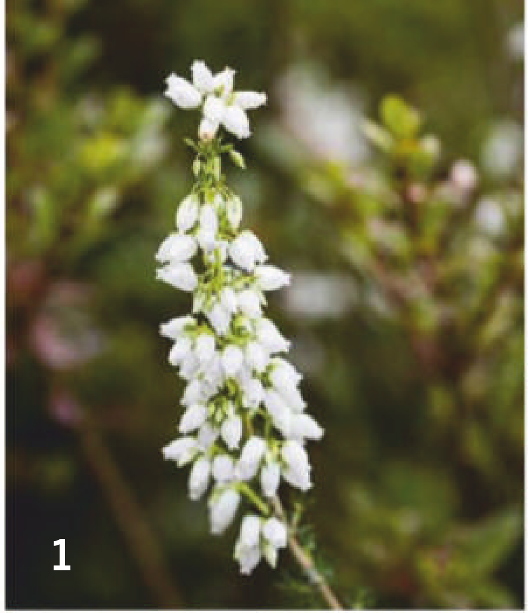
Layers of planting on sloping ground hide the garage and tool shed from the garden. The white blades of *Phalaris arundinacea* var. *picta* 'Feesey' muscle their way in front of *Salix lanata*. Tall eupatoriums, sangisorbas and rudbeckias form the background and *Chelone obliqua* creeps along the front.

In some gardens *Eupatorium maculatum* 'Purple Bush' is thought to be too big and too thuggish but here it is allowed to spread so that its deep-purple flowers can help to create a screen and its foliage a background to shorter plants. The golden flowers of *Crocosmia* Walberton Yellow (= 'Walcroy') shine out at the front of this border.

The house was built by Will and Sue on the highest point of their land so that the views from the large windows are out over the garden as well as out towards the stunning landscape. The planting around the house is in raised beds that closely skirt the building.

30 PLANTS FROM DURNAMUCK

1 *Erica cinerea* f. *alba* 'Alba Major' A prostrate evergreen shrub with bright-green foliage and short racemes of white flowers from July to September. Spreads to 40cm. 30cm. RHS H7†.
2 *Alonsoa warscewiczii* Slender, wiry purple-tinged stems are packed with bright-scarlet flowers from June until October. 50cm. RHS H4.
3 *Inula hookeri* Fine-rayed yellow daisies, 6cm across, at the end of summer. Can spread rapidly on rich, moist soil. 75cm. RHS H6.
4 *Pinus mugo* Compact, slow-growing conifer with a rounded habit. Needs sharply drained soil in full sun. 1m after ten years. RHS H7, USDA 2a-7b.
5 *Kniphofia* 'Toffee Nosed' Tough, grey-green foliage and slender spires of apricot flowers, from June to August, that fade to cream. 1m. AGM*. RHS H5.
6 *Osteospermum* 'Nairobi Purple' A spreading plant with dark-purple flowers that have a silvery sheen on the reverse of the petals. Flowers all summer in full sun. 20cm. RHS H3, USDA 9b-10a.
7 *Rhodanthemum hosmariense* Neat domes of finely cut silvery foliage that is covered in white daises throughout the summer. It needs a hot and dry situation. 25cm. AGM. RHS H4.
8 *Allium beesianum* One of the few truly blue-flowered members of the onion family. Narrow, grass-like leaves with petite, dangling flowers at the end of August. 15cm. AGM. RHS H5.
9 *Chelone obliqua* An upright herbaceous perennial with compact spikes of tightly packed, dusty-pink flowers. 80cm. RHS H5, USDA 5a-9b.
10 *Olearia* 'Talbot de Malahide' One of the hardier forms of the genus that tolerates high winds and sea spray. Tough foliage and sprays of daisy-like flowers in late summer. 2m. RHS H3.
11 *Myosotidium hortensia* Good in a sheltered, shady spot. Glossy, emerald leaves and spring flowers like enormous forget-me-nots. 45cm. RHS H4.
12 *Agapanthus* seedling A gift from Graham Gough of Marchants Hardy Plants, selected for its purple-blue flowers and slender stem. 40cm. RHS H4.
13 *Fascicularia bicolor* The rigid, toothed leaves of this bromeliad turn scarlet at the base when mature and cradle a tight head of bright-blue flowers. 40cm. RHS H3.
14 *Celmisia semicordata* seedling Grown from seed brought from Inverewe with silvered leaves topped by white daisies. Needs good drainage. 30cm.
15 *Salix lanata* An unusual form of willow that has rounded, woolly, silvery leaves. It is slow-growing but will eventually form a rounded shrub. 1.2m. AGM. RHS H7.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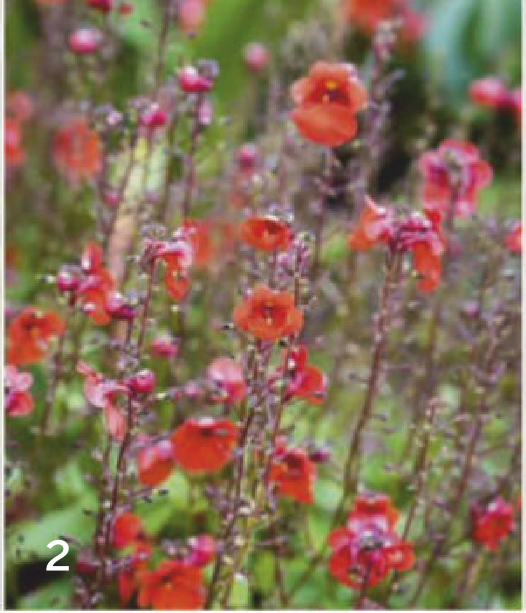
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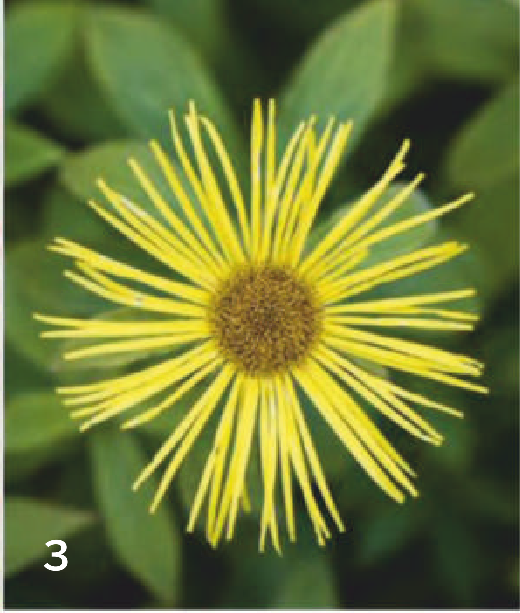
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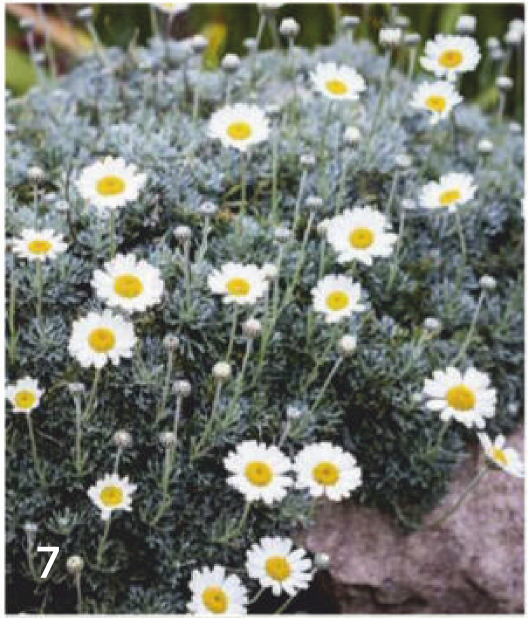
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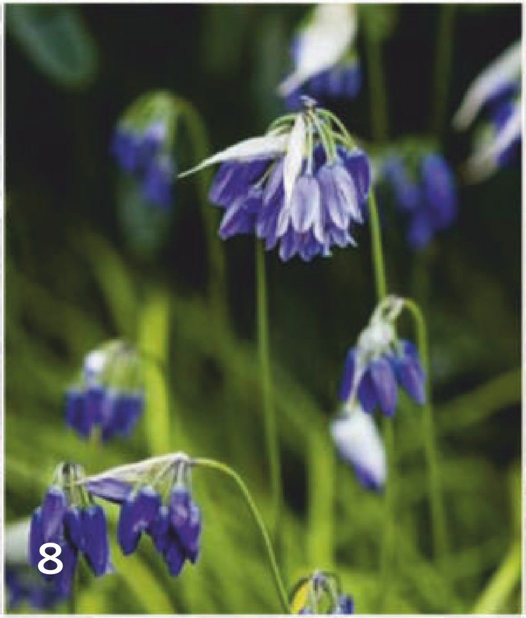
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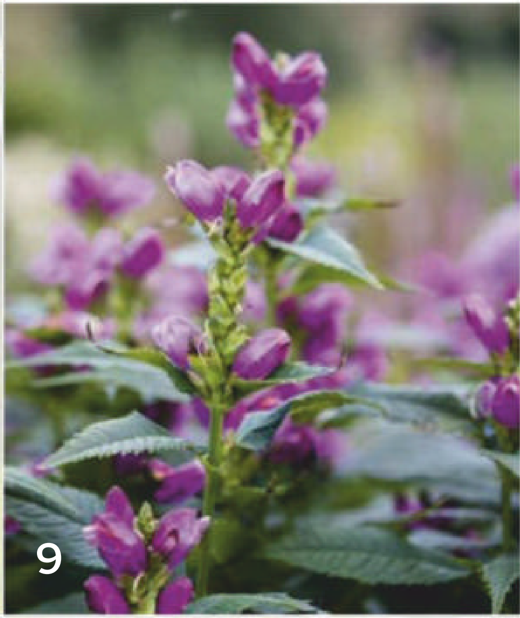
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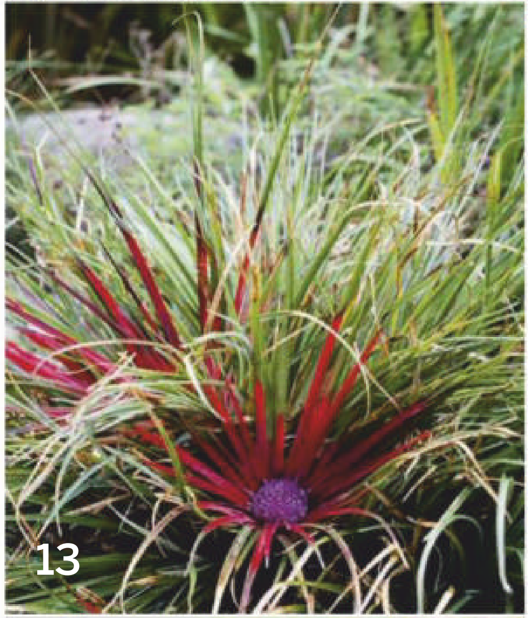
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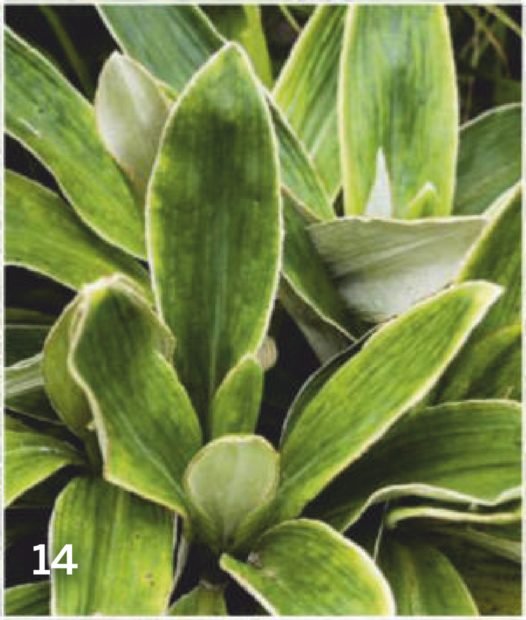
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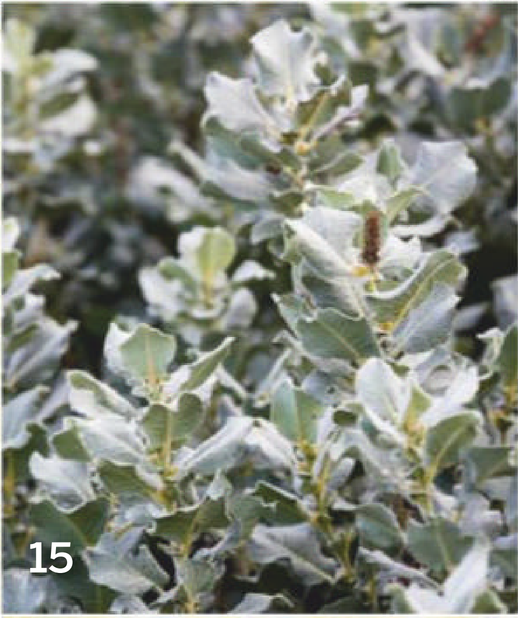
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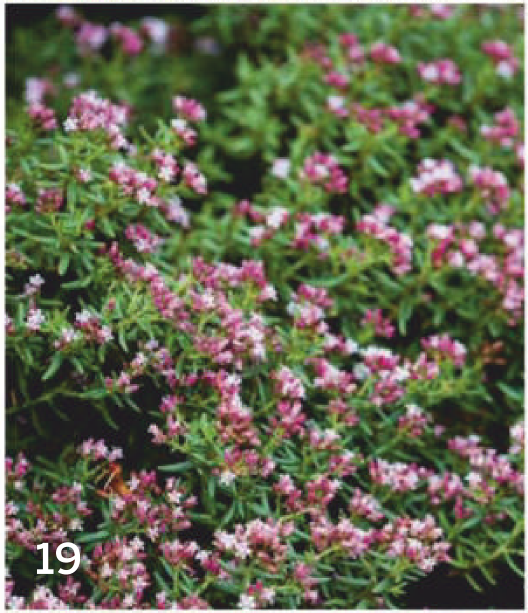
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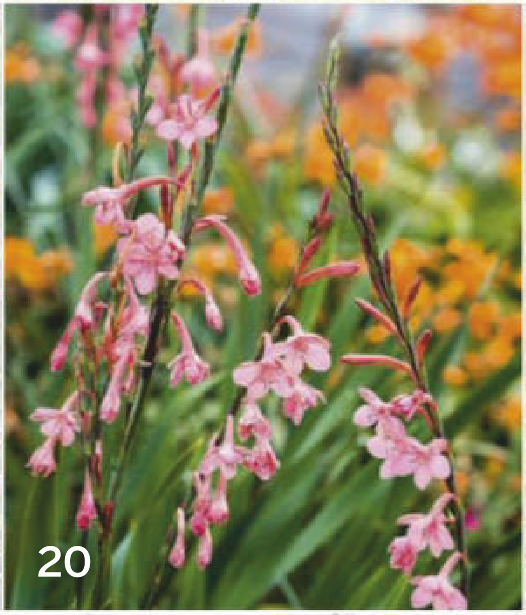
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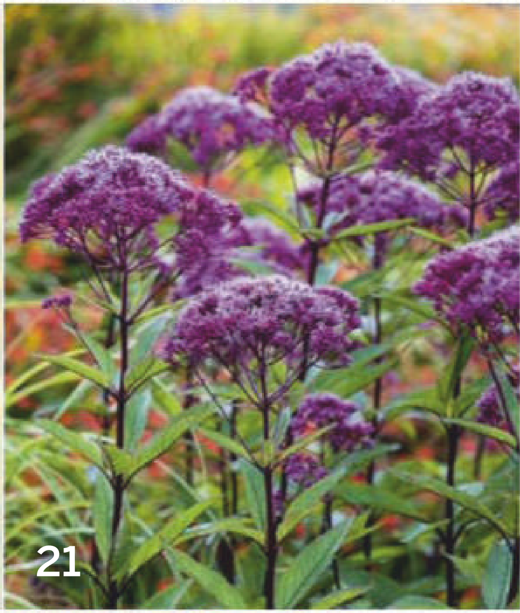
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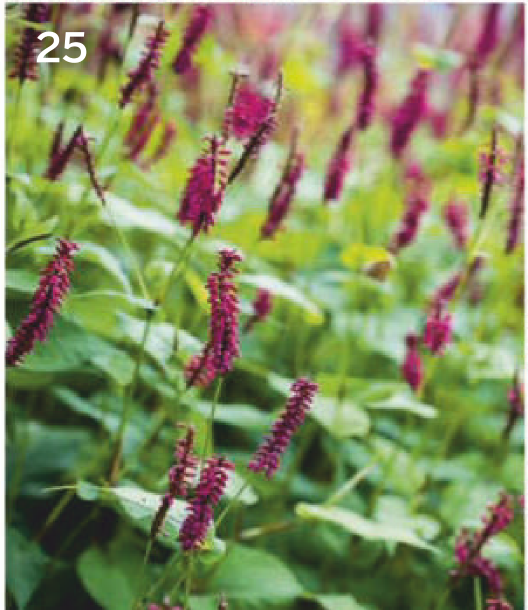
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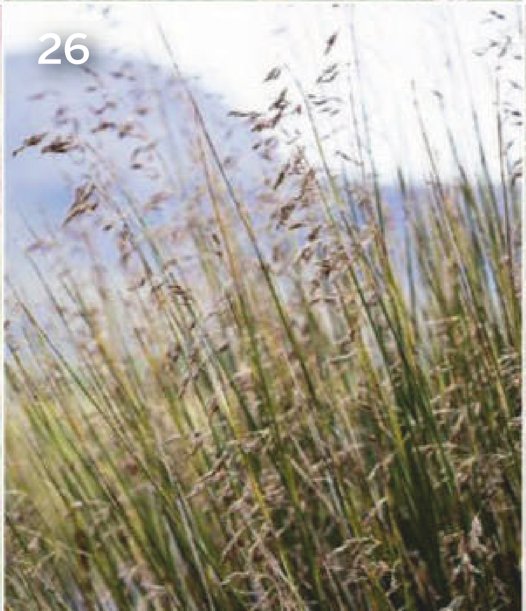
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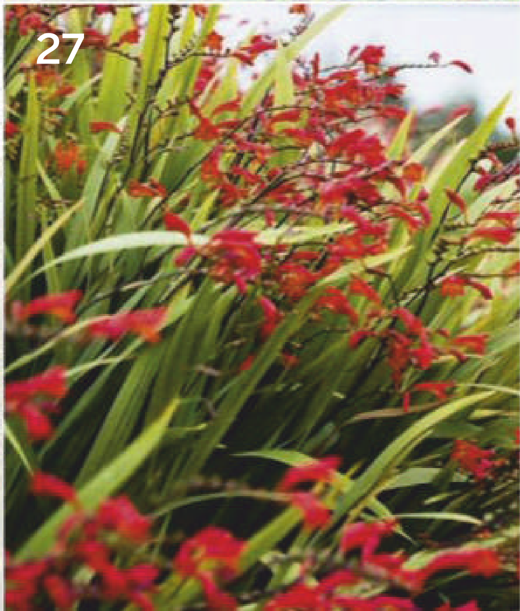
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*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society. †Hardiness ratings given where available.

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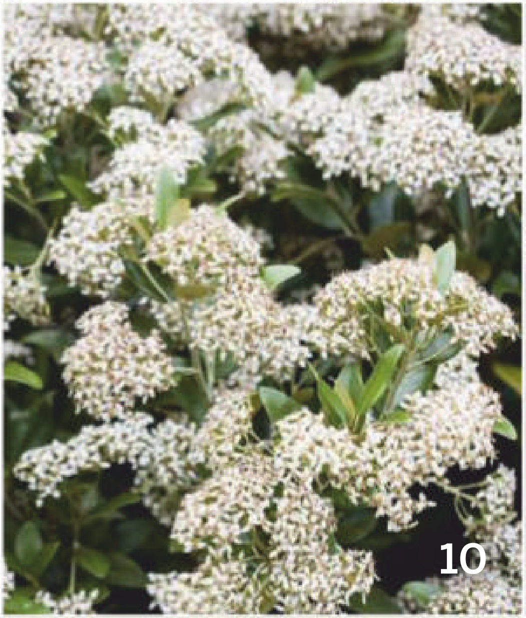
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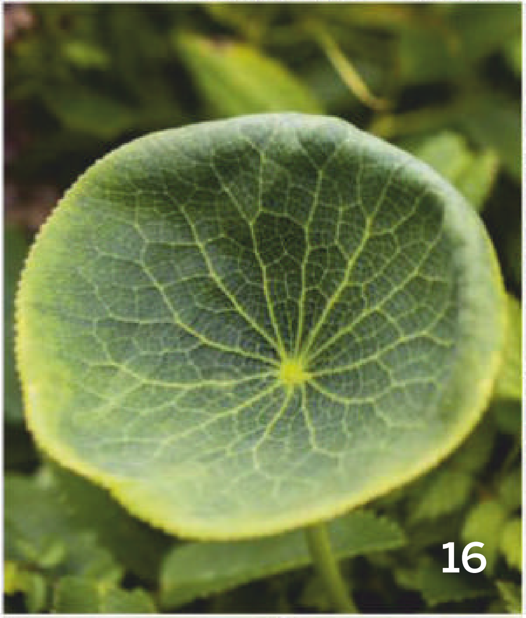
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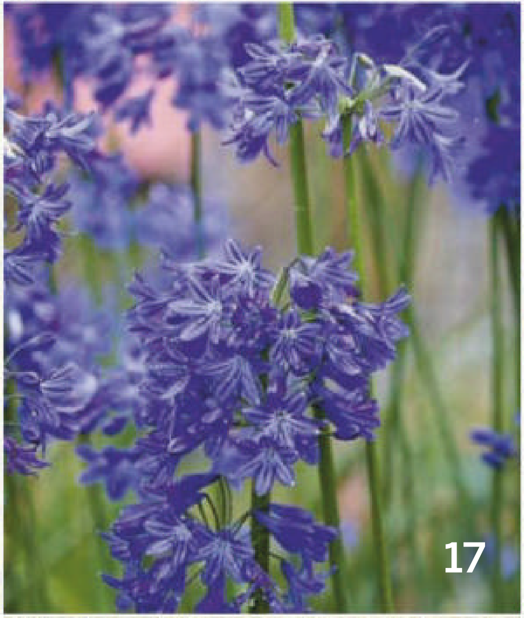
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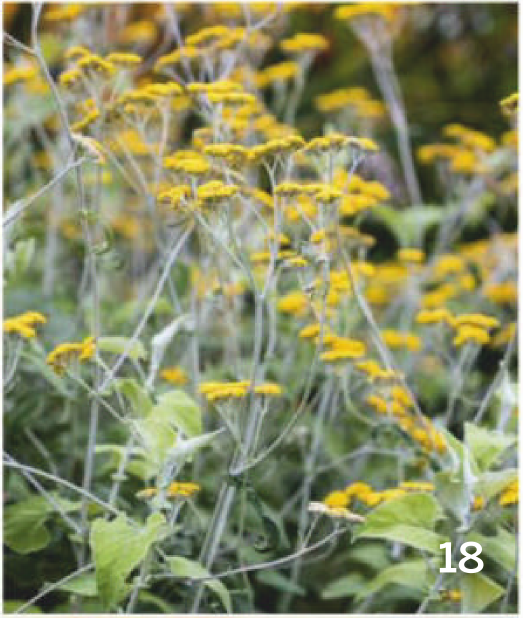
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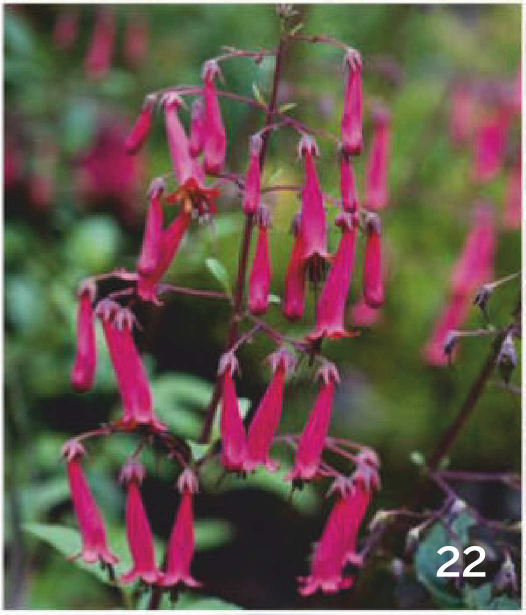
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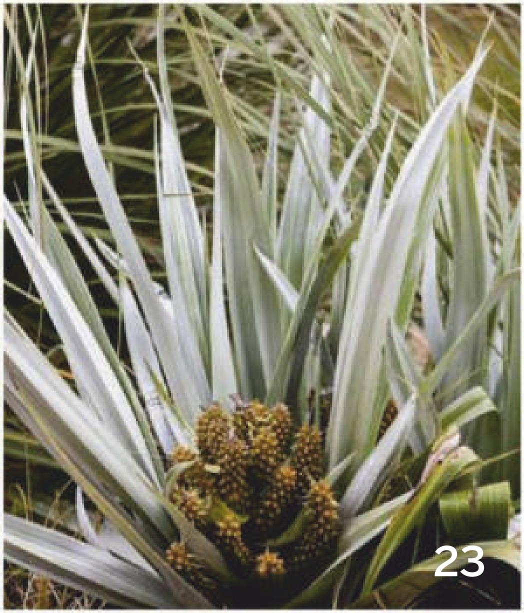
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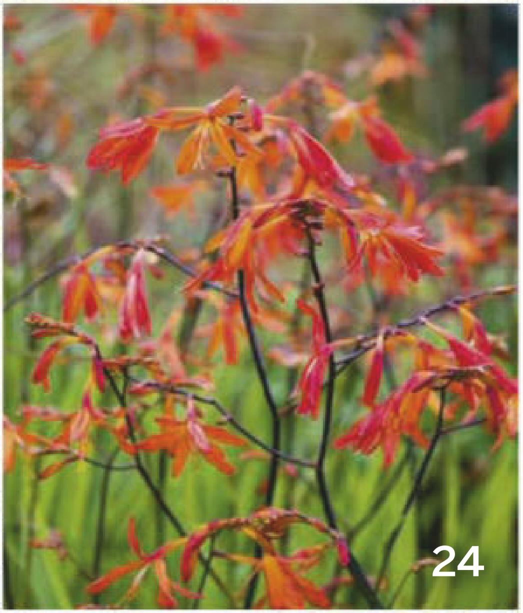
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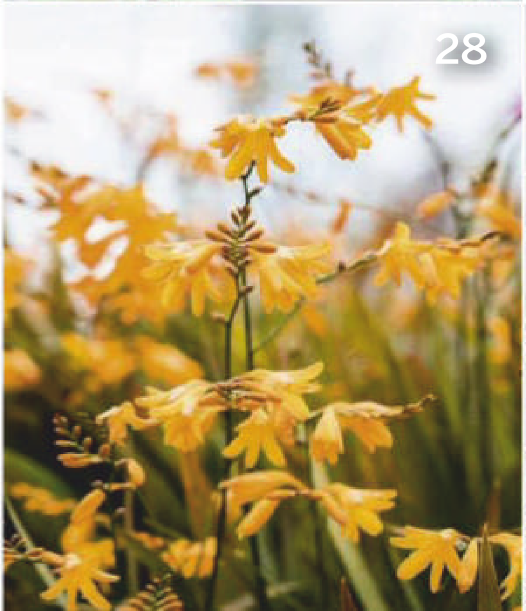
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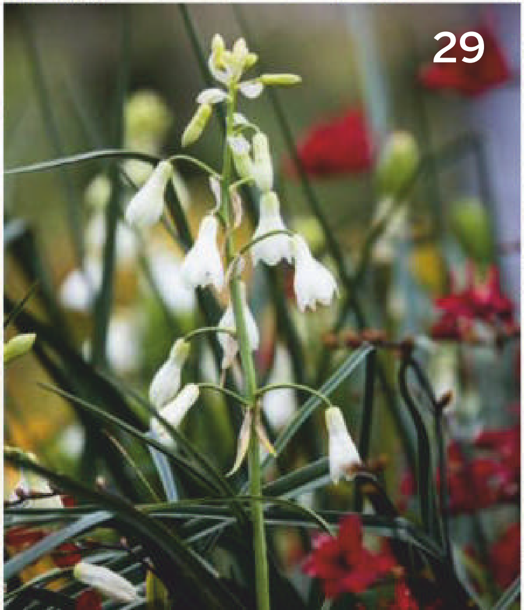
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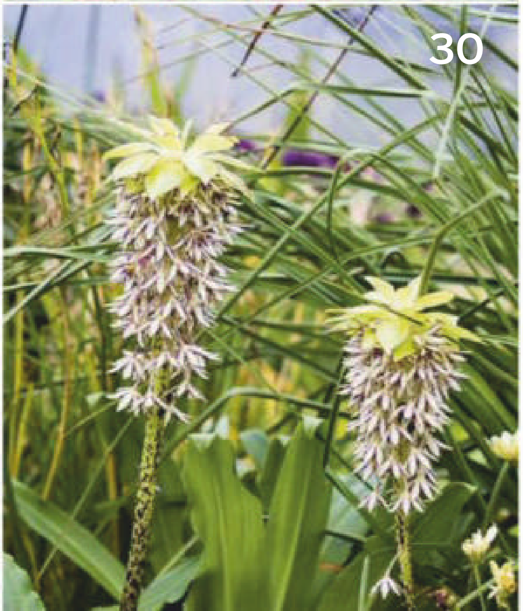
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16 ***Peltocalathos baurii*** A rarely seen South African relative of the buttercup with rounded, fleshy leaves and bright-yellow flowers that resemble a large celandine. 50cm. RHS H7.

17 ***Agapanthus* 'Bressingham Blue'** Sturdy, rapidly clump-forming hybrid with dark violet-blue flowers in late summer. 80cm. RHS H4.

18 ***Helichrysum hypoleucum*** Rare South African sub-shrub with small, felty-grey, heart-shaped leaves and flat yellow flowers June to August. 50cm. RHS H3.

19 ***Crassula sarcocaulis*** A bushy succulent resembling a small tree, with tiny, star-shaped, pink-and-white flowers in late summer. 60cm. AGM. RHS H3.

20 ***Watsonia* 'Tresco Dwarf Pink'** Lance-shaped leaves and upright stems of pink tubular flowers. Hardy only in very mild parts of Britain. 50cm. RHS H3.

21 ***Eupatorium purpureum*** An imposing, clump-forming perennial with domes of purplish-pink flowers from late summer into autumn. 2m. RHS H7, USDA 4a-9b.

22 ***Phygelius* x *rectus* Somerford Funfair Wine (= 'Yapwin')** In mild areas an evergreen suckering shrub with stems of showy, magenta flowers in summer. Herbaceous in cold areas. 75cm. RHS H5.

23 ***Astelia chathamica*** An evergreen perennial that forms clumps of silvery, sword-shaped leaves. Panicles of small greenish flowers appear in late summer. Prefers shade. 1m. AGM. RHS H3.

24 ***Crocosmia* x *crocosmioides* 'Castle Ward Late'** A reliable German cultivar with pleated, sword-shaped leaves and bright-scarlet flowers in August. 90cm. RHS H4.

25 ***Persicaria amplexicaulis* Taurus (= 'Blotau')** Slender stems of deep-red flowers June to September. Less vigorous and more compact than other forms. 90cm. RHS H5.

26 ***Thamnochortus insignis*** Upright, slender, dark-green stems marked with golden sheaths give a striped effect. 1.5m. AGM. RHS H3.

27 ***Crocosmia* 'Emberglow'** A sturdy, reliable hybrid that quickly forms large colonies. Arching stems of deep-red flowers have a burnt-orange base. 80cm. RHS H4, USDA 5a-9b.

28 ***Crocosmia* x *crocosmiiflora* 'Coleton Fishacre'** The leaves are flushed with a copper sheen, which sets off the bright apricot-coloured flowers. A floriferous hybrid that flowers from July to September. 60cm. RHS H5.

29 ***Galtonia candicans*** A bulb that produces spires of white, waxy flowers and grey-green foliage in August. The cool, fresh white is a refreshing counterpoint to the bright colours of the midsummer garden. 1m. AGM. RHS H4, USDA 6a-10b.

30 ***Eucomis bicolor*** Thick stems packed with purple-edged, star-shaped flowers topped with a rosette of leafy bracts such that the plant resembles a pineapple. Needs well-drained soil and full sun. 60cm. AGM. RHS H4.

THE SURROUNDING LANDSCAPE WAS ALWAYS THE FOCUS FOR THE GARDEN, AND THE PLANTS ALWAYS LEAD THE EYE TO THE VIEW

▷ and filled with soil mixed with gravel and grit. This helps with drainage and also keeps the soil fertility low. Rich soil would encourage soft, sappy growth and the plants would not be able to stand up to the wind. In many parts of the garden the soil is mulched with sharp sand, which helps keep down weeds, improves drainage and also serves to unify the garden visually.

Grasses are used throughout the borders. *Miscanthus*, *Panicum* and *Stipa* have been chosen for their ability to move in the wind without being beaten down by it. Among the grasses are large clumps of grass-like restios, native to South Africa's Cape Province and KwaZulu-Natal, looking relaxed and at home here in the Scottish Highlands, surely the most northerly place they are grown. Another spectacular South African native, *Dierama*, sparkle around the restios. Known as angel's fishing rods, their tall, narrow stems arch over under the weight of the flowers. At Durnamuck they are taller than I have ever seen, the result both of the climate and the selections Will has made of plants grown from wild-collected seed. The Drakensberg region where they grow is snow covered in winter and has a high rainfall in summer, conditions similar to Durnamuck.

My favourite part of the garden is a high mound covered with flaming red and orange *Crocosmia*. I love it even more when Sue points out stone steps, hidden among the plants, that lead to the top of the mound and a low stone bench around a steel fire pit. It is also a belvedere from which you can see the layout of the garden and admire views across the cultivated area to the meadow beyond and then down to the sea. It is a sight you could never tire of. ☐

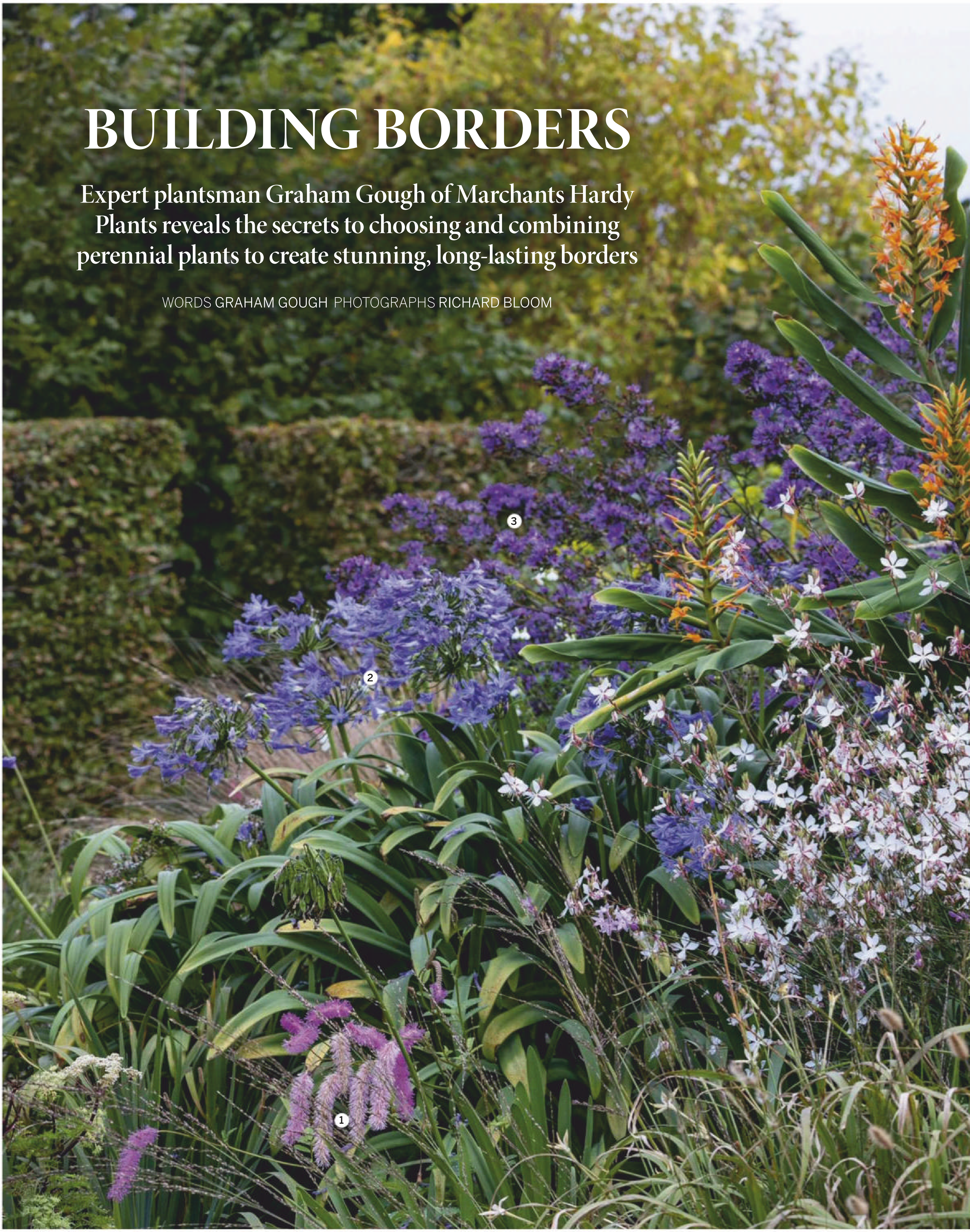
USEFUL INFORMATION
Address 2 Durnamuck, Little Loch Broom, Wester Ross, Scotland IV23 2QZ.
Tel 01854 633761.
Website scotlandsgardens.org
Open The garden is occasionally open under Scotland's open garden scheme. See website above for details.

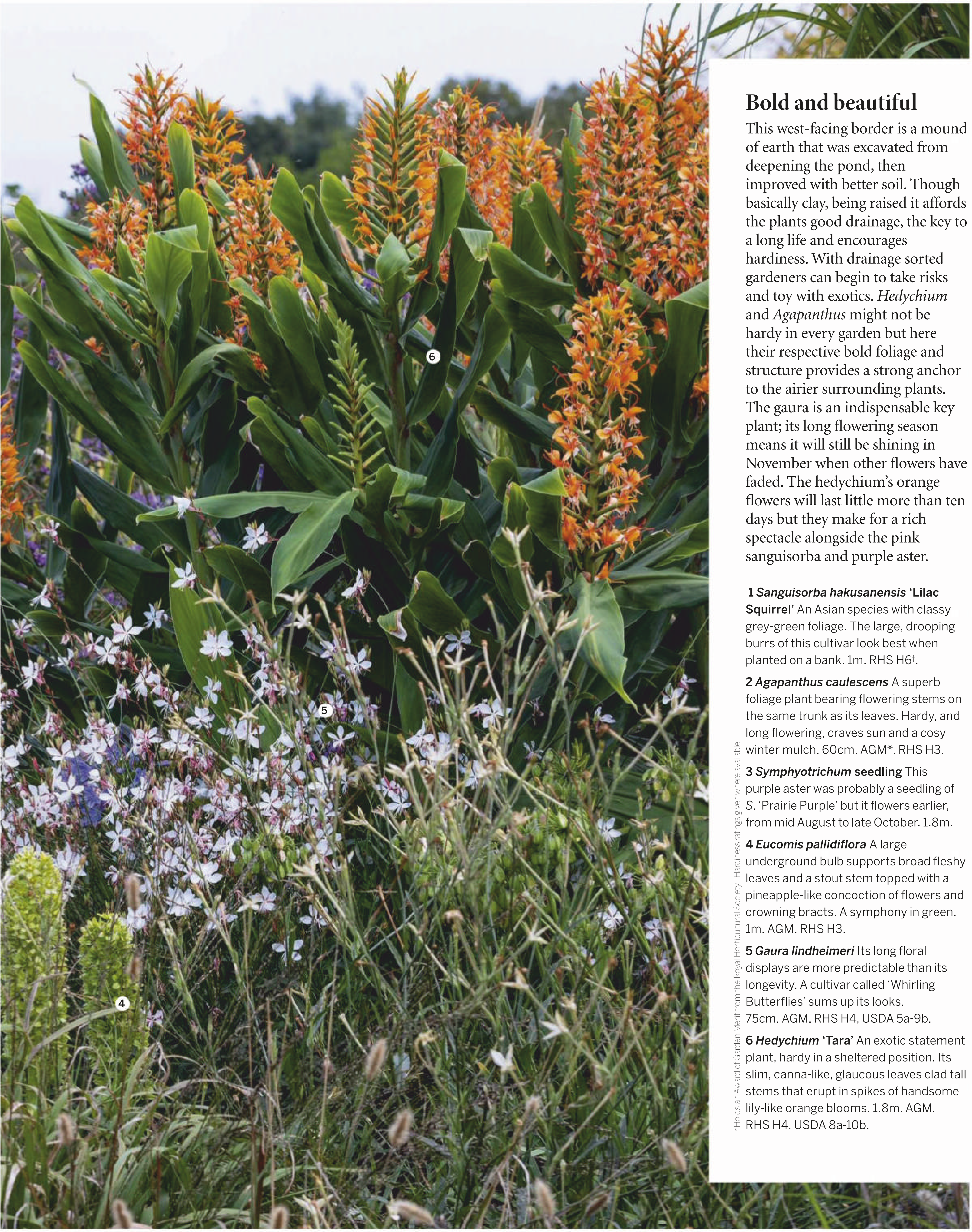
Right The fresh white bells of the summer hyacinth bulb, *Galtonia candicans* have been planted among the glowing red flowers of *Crocosmia* 'Hellfire' and the adjacent *Crocosmia* x *crocosmiiflora* 'Coleton Fishacre', a cultivar that has formed large clumps in the garden. As a contrast to the soft mounds of colourful flowers, this bed is punctuated by the upright, sombre stems of restios. This is one of the most northerly gardens where restios are grown.

BUILDING BORDERS

Expert plantsman Graham Gough of Marchants Hardy Plants reveals the secrets to choosing and combining perennial plants to create stunning, long-lasting borders

WORDS GRAHAM GOUGH PHOTOGRAPHS RICHARD BLOOM





Bold and beautiful

This west-facing border is a mound of earth that was excavated from deepening the pond, then improved with better soil. Though basically clay, being raised it affords the plants good drainage, the key to a long life and encourages hardiness. With drainage sorted gardeners can begin to take risks and toy with exotics. *Hedychium* and *Agapanthus* might not be hardy in every garden but here their respective bold foliage and structure provides a strong anchor to the airier surrounding plants. The gaura is an indispensable key plant; its long flowering season means it will still be shining in November when other flowers have faded. The hedychium's orange flowers will last little more than ten days but they make for a rich spectacle alongside the pink sanguisorba and purple aster.

1 *Sanguisorba hakusanensis* 'Lilac Squirrel' An Asian species with classy grey-green foliage. The large, drooping burrs of this cultivar look best when planted on a bank. 1m. RHS H6[†].

2 *Agapanthus caulescens* A superb foliage plant bearing flowering stems on the same trunk as its leaves. Hardy, and long flowering, craves sun and a cosy winter mulch. 60cm. AGM*. RHS H3.

3 *Symphyotrichum* seedling This purple aster was probably a seedling of *S.* 'Prairie Purple' but it flowers earlier, from mid August to late October. 1.8m.

4 *Eucomis pallidiflora* A large underground bulb supports broad fleshy leaves and a stout stem topped with a pineapple-like concoction of flowers and crowning bracts. A symphony in green. 1m. AGM. RHS H3.

5 *Gaura lindheimeri* Its long floral displays are more predictable than its longevity. A cultivar called 'Whirling Butterflies' sums up its looks. 75cm. AGM. RHS H4, USDA 5a-9b.

6 *Hedychium* 'Tara' An exotic statement plant, hardy in a sheltered position. Its slim, canna-like, glaucous leaves clad tall stems that erupt in spikes of handsome lily-like orange blooms. 1.8m. AGM. RHS H4, USDA 8a-10b.

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*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society. [†]Hardiness ratings given where available.

Colour contrasts

One of our older plantings, the unique bluish colour and fine texture of the *Salix purpurea* 'Nancy Saunders' (**8**) is integral to this planting and a gift for our heavy clay soil. The tapering vertical spikes of persicaria in white and red and the blunter spikes of the purple *Eucomis* bring a lighter touch to this planting. That cannot be said of the craggy stems of *Eupatorium maculatum* 'Riesenschirm', which, with its huge heads of dusky purple has been chosen for drama and solidity. The *Helenium* enlivens the red *Persicaria*, but is cooled by the close proximity of its white brethren

1 ***Miscanthus sinensis* 'Rotfuchs'** Bold grasses embracing wide to narrow foliage, silky flowers from claret to gold. Makes a superb statement, and rustles too. 4m. USDA 5a-9b.

2 ***Persicaria amplexicaulis* 'Alba'** Bold green foliage, provides a green mantle for the slim, tapered, white spikes borne for months on end. 90cm. RHS H7, USDA 4a-7b.

3 ***Persicaria amplexicaulis* 'Marchant's Red Devil'** Our own selection is a deep, rich red and usefully short. 90cm.

4 ***Eupatorium maculatum* 'Riesenschirm'** A backbone perennial with clouds of dusky-purple flowers borne on black-purple stems. Prefers damp soil. 2m. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.

5 ***Stipa gigantea*** A sun worshipper that lives up to its name. Its thrilling, aerial display of golden oat-like flowers has no rival. 2.5m. AGM. RHS H4.

6 ***Eucomis* 'John Treasure'** Winter hardy South African bulb. 45cm.

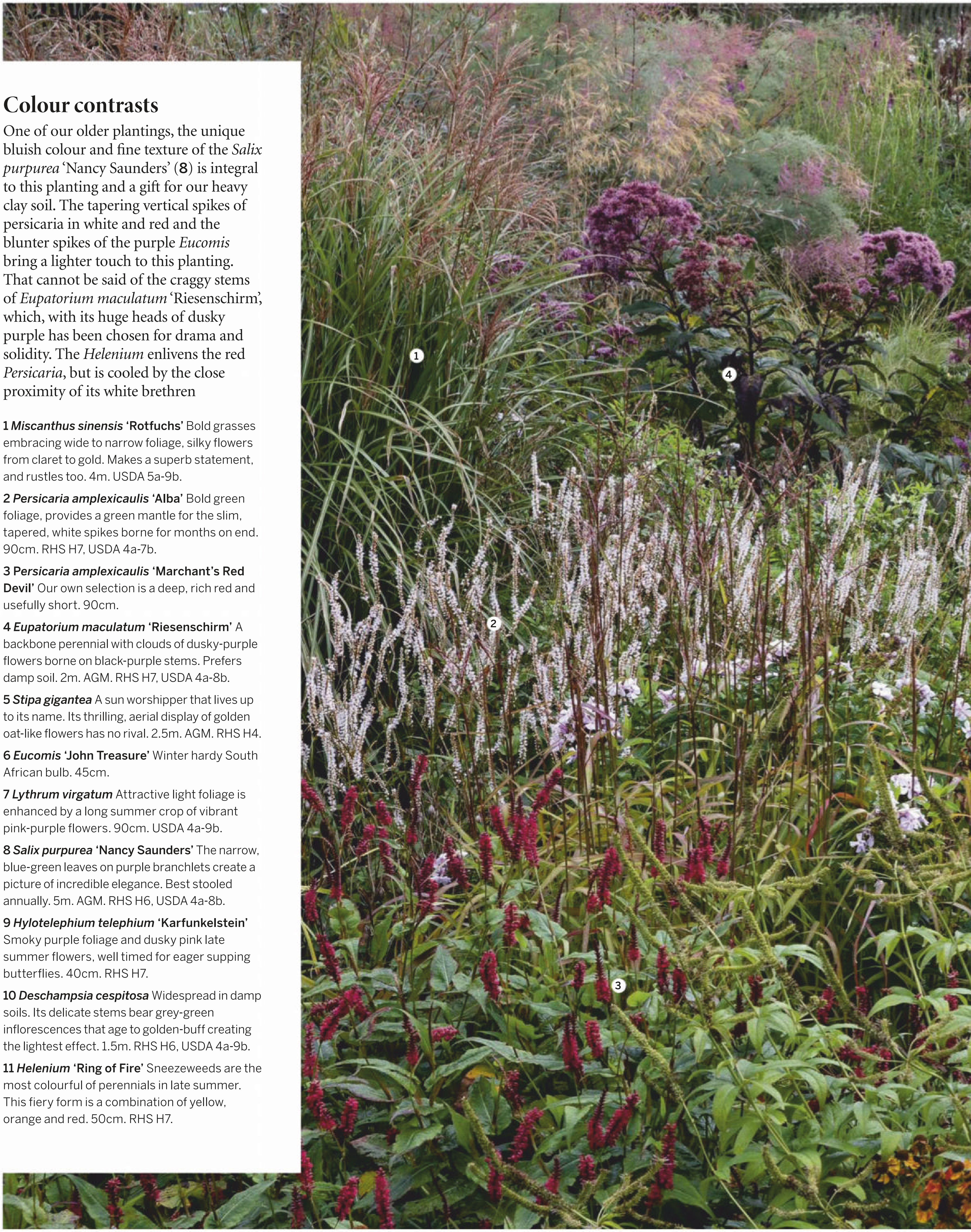
7 ***Lythrum virgatum*** Attractive light foliage is enhanced by a long summer crop of vibrant pink-purple flowers. 90cm. USDA 4a-9b.

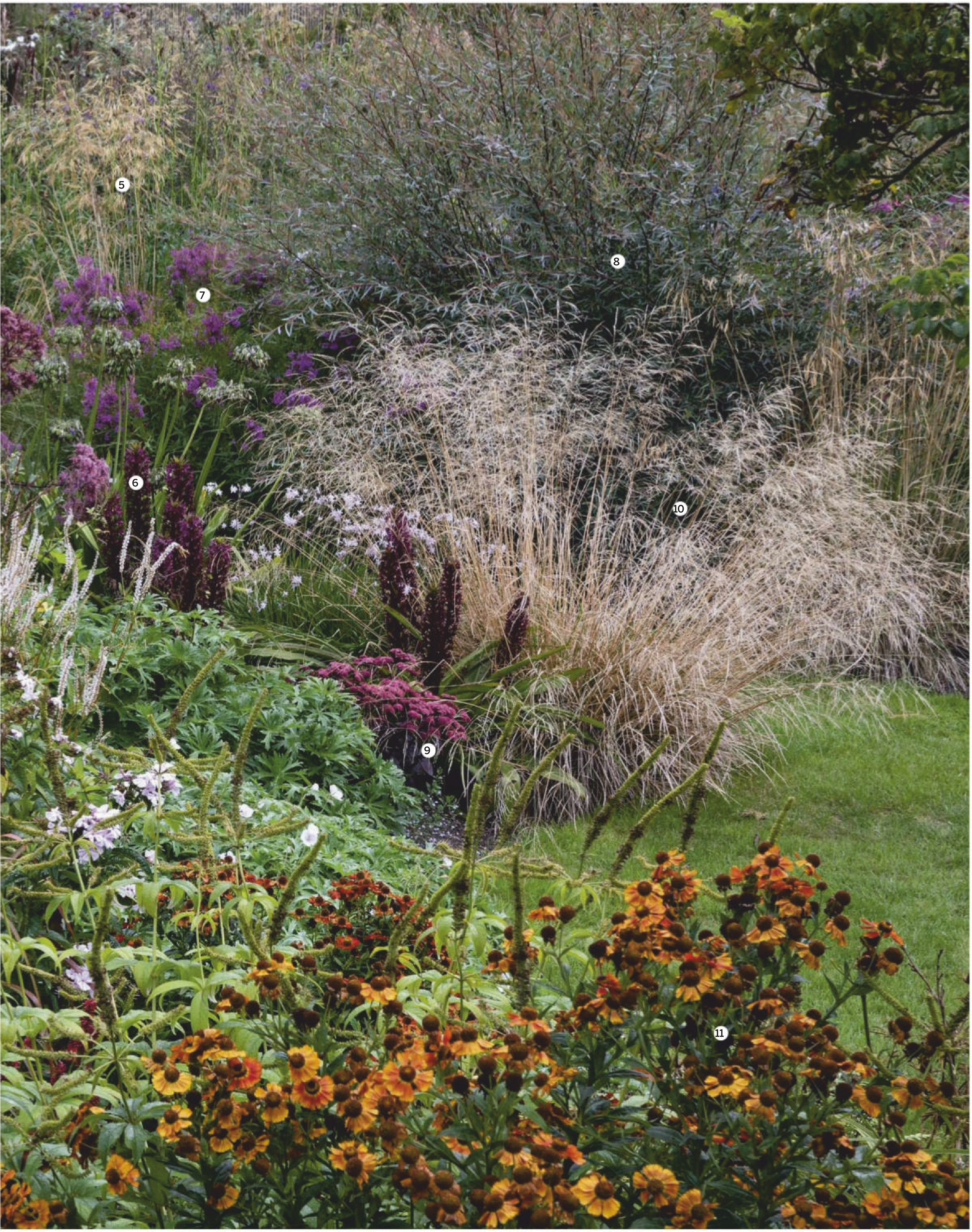
8 ***Salix purpurea* 'Nancy Saunders'** The narrow, blue-green leaves on purple branchlets create a picture of incredible elegance. Best stooled annually. 5m. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 4a-8b.

9 ***Hylotelephium telephium* 'Karfunkelstein'** Smoky purple foliage and dusky pink late summer flowers, well timed for eager supping butterflies. 40cm. RHS H7.

10 ***Deschampsia cespitosa*** Widespread in damp soils. Its delicate stems bear grey-green inflorescences that age to golden-buff creating the lightest effect. 1.5m. RHS H6, USDA 4a-9b.

11 ***Helenium* 'Ring of Fire'** Sneezeweeds are the most colourful of perennials in late summer. This fiery form is a combination of yellow, orange and red. 50cm. RHS H7.

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Form and texture

It's more important to think in terms of form and texture than colour when designing borders. This south-facing border is based around contrasting grasses: pennisetums renowned for their long flowering, a tall miscanthus and a form of panicum, perhaps the most strikingly coloured grass. Grasses really benefit from having space around them, which highlights their shape and form. The lower storey uses long-flowering plants and pleasing foliage, such as *Nicotiana langsdorfii,* and the low-growing *Parahebe* 'Snow Clouds'. The orange *Hedychium* 'Tara' (see page 37) is important to this scheme, without it the planting would be much less charged.

1 ***Miscanthus*** **x** ***giganteus*** A plant for large gardens – its foliage reaches 4m in wet years and its roots encroach slowly but persistently, Its leaves lull with a gentle rustle. 4m.

2 ***Pennisetum orientale*** A beautiful 'soft' grass revelling in hot conditions and a great favourite of mine. 90cm. AGM. RHS H3, USDA 5a-8b.

3 ***Parahebe*** **'Snow Clouds'** An evergreen never ceasing to charm. Forms a benign, low leafy mound at the border front and occasionally covers itself with small white flowers pencilled with rosy-lilac inside. 25cm.

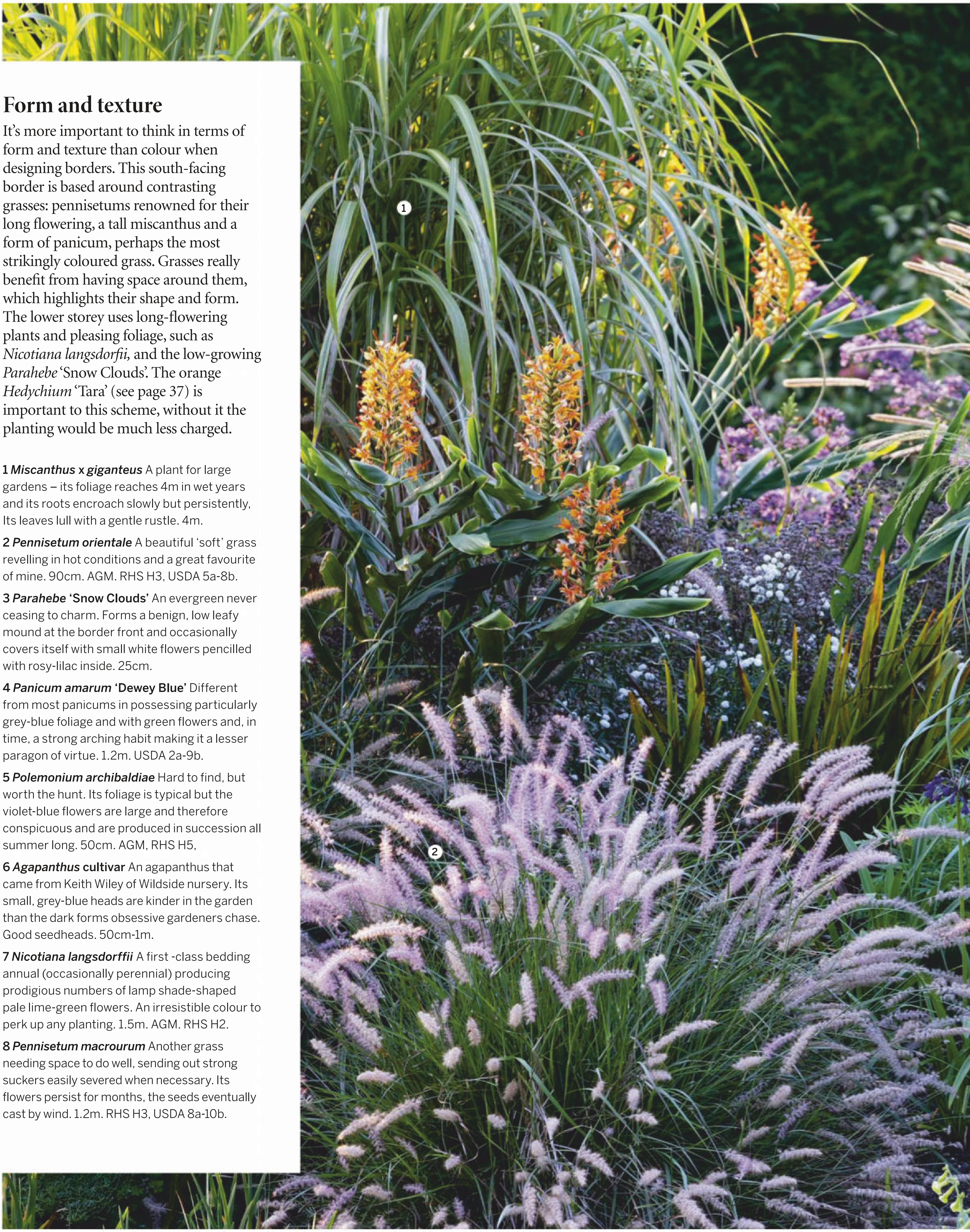
4 ***Panicum amarum*** **'Dewey Blue'** Different from most panicums in possessing particularly grey-blue foliage and with green flowers and, in time, a strong arching habit making it a lesser paragon of virtue. 1.2m. USDA 2a-9b.

5 ***Polemonium archibaldiae*** Hard to find, but worth the hunt. Its foliage is typical but the violet-blue flowers are large and therefore conspicuous and are produced in succession all summer long. 50cm. AGM, RHS H5,

6 ***Agapanthus*** **cultivar** An agapanthus that came from Keith Wiley of Wildside nursery. Its small, grey-blue heads are kinder in the garden than the dark forms obsessive gardeners chase. Good seedheads. 50cm-1m.

7 ***Nicotiana langsdorffii*** A first -class bedding annual (occasionally perennial) producing prodigious numbers of lamp shade-shaped pale lime-green flowers. An irresistible colour to perk up any planting. 1.5m. AGM. RHS H2.

8 ***Pennisetum macrourum*** Another grass needing space to do well, sending out strong suckers easily severed when necessary. Its flowers persist for months, the seeds eventually cast by wind. 1.2m. RHS H3, USDA 8a-10b.



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Subtle light

This bed gently slopes south to southwest so is enhanced by late sun. It's a large bed, close to the house and is planted with lower growing plants to preserve views. Some existing plants have been kept for bulk, notably a cardoon and the spectacular *Glycyrrhiza yunnanensis* (on the far left, behind the *Dipsacus fullonum*), but none are over heavy. Colours are relaxed but once again texture and good foliage are pre-requisite. With two years growth the border and its combinations have given great pleasure.

1 *Heuchera villosa* 'Autumn Bride' Spectacular for its bold, plush, bright-green foliage and striking, abundant wands of tiny white flowers through autumn. 1m. USDA 3a-8b.

2 *Dipsacus fullonum* A plant that has few rivals for its height and spiny silhouette, but beware, it's a prolific self-seeder. 1m. RHS H7, USDA 3a-8b.

3 *Salix eleagnos* A beautiful large shrub for drier soils, wand like in wind when flashing the white underside to its narrow grey-green leaves. 3m.

4 *Verbena rigida* f. *lilacina* 'Polaris' A hardy pale-lilac cultivar makes a good counterpart to more common purples Suckering gently, the summer/autumn flower show seems never to stop. 40cm. RHS H3.

5 *Tulbaghia violacea* 'Harry Hay' Makes up for its strong, garlic-like odour with a constant display of charming, starry, lilac-purple flowers. 45cm.

6 *Panicum virgatum* 'Northwind' A switch grass with a dense, upright habit. Its froth of beadlike flowers just covers the foliage and its earthy autumn colouring is superb. 1.5m. RHS H5, USDA 5b-9b.

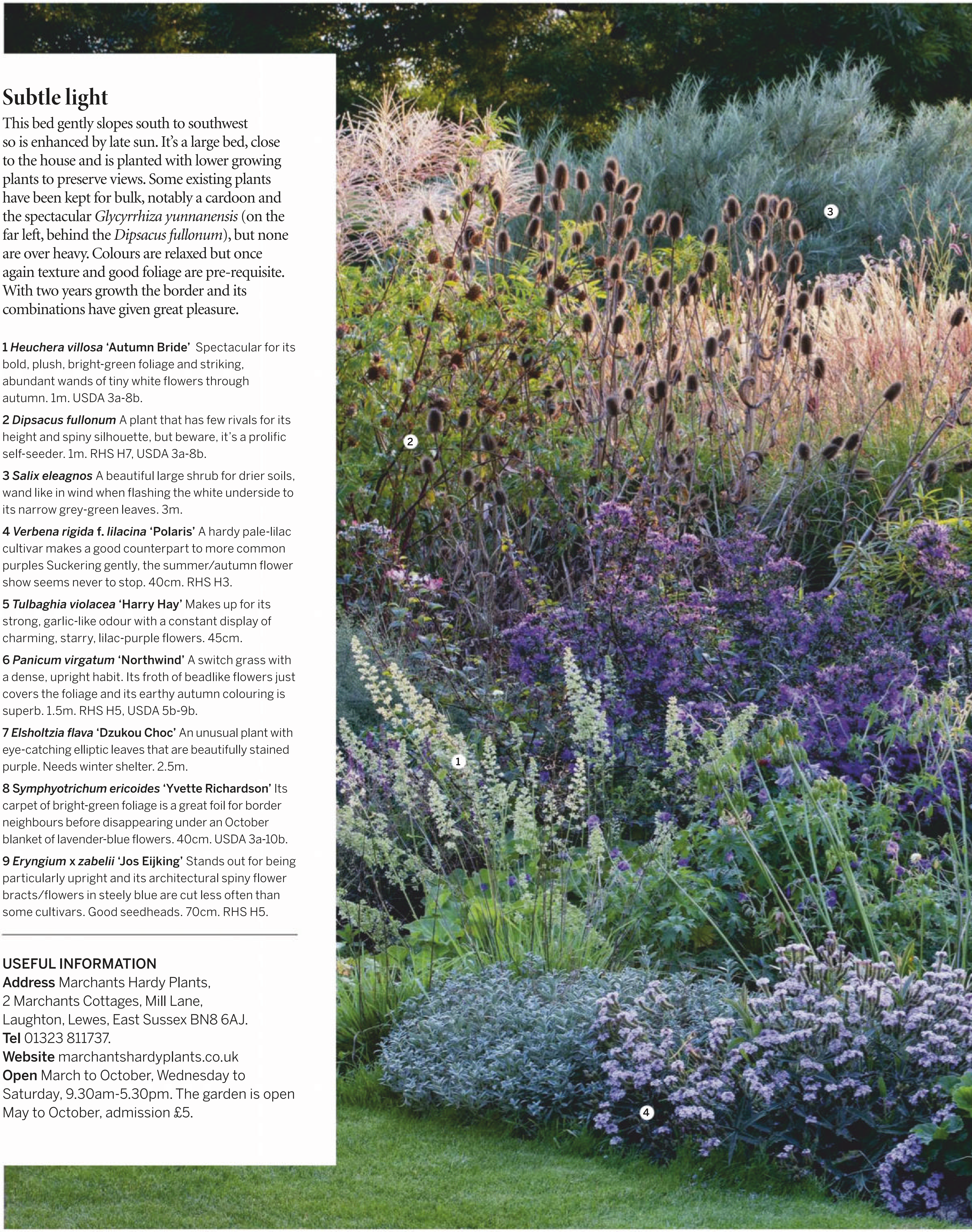
7 *Elsholtzia flava* 'Dzukou Choc' An unusual plant with eye-catching elliptic leaves that are beautifully stained purple. Needs winter shelter. 2.5m.

8 *Symphyotrichum ericoides* 'Yvette Richardson' Its carpet of bright-green foliage is a great foil for border neighbours before disappearing under an October blanket of lavender-blue flowers. 40cm. USDA 3a-10b.

9 *Eryngium* x *zabelii* 'Jos Eijking' Stands out for being particularly upright and its architectural spiny flower bracts/flowers in steely blue are cut less often than some cultivars. Good seedheads. 70cm. RHS H5.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Address Marchants Hardy Plants,
2 Marchants Cottages, Mill Lane,
Laughton, Lewes, East Sussex BN8 6AJ.
Tel 01323 811737.
Website marchantshardyplants.co.uk
Open March to October, Wednesday to Saturday, 9.30am-5.30pm. The garden is open May to October, admission £5.



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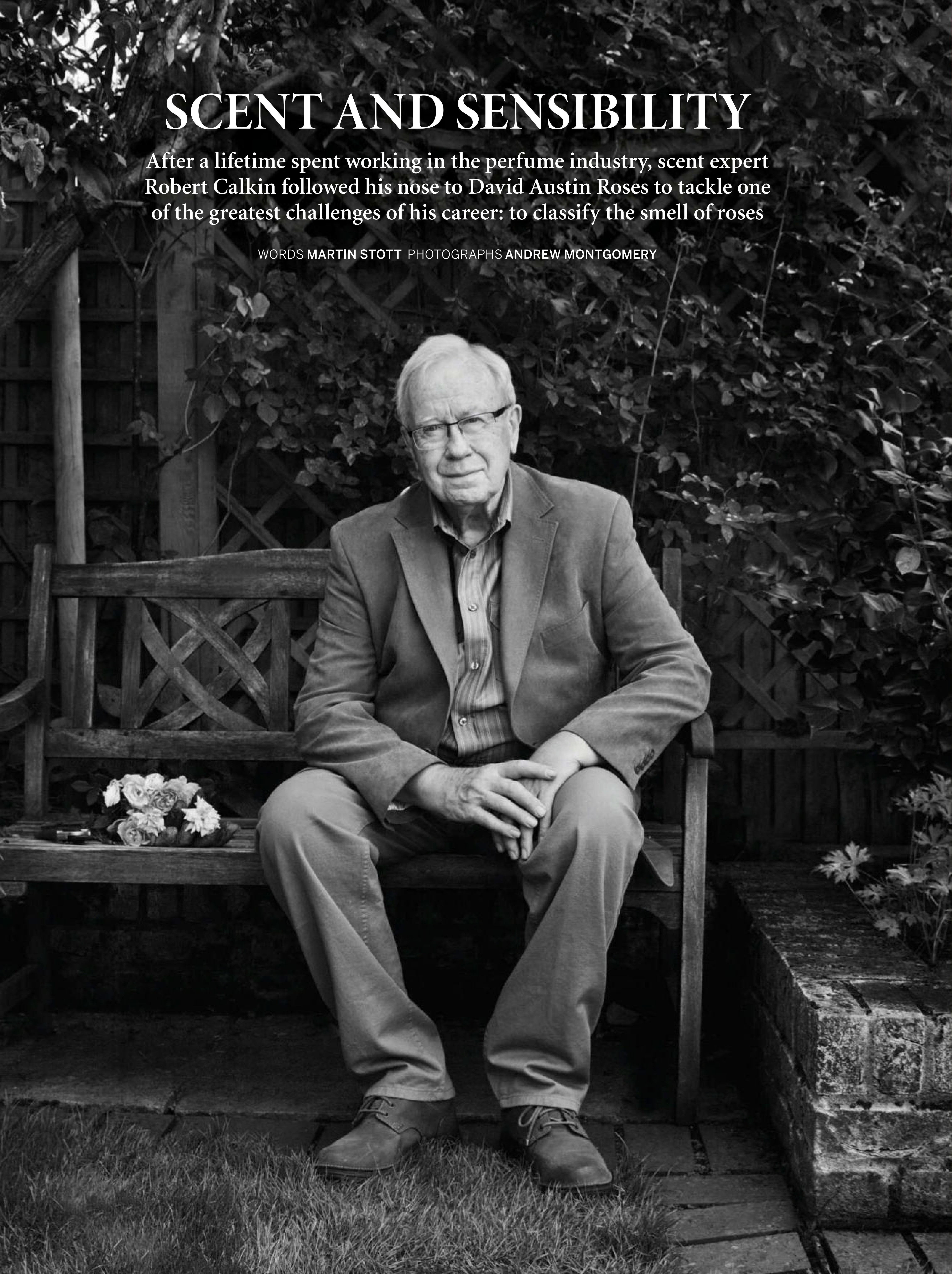
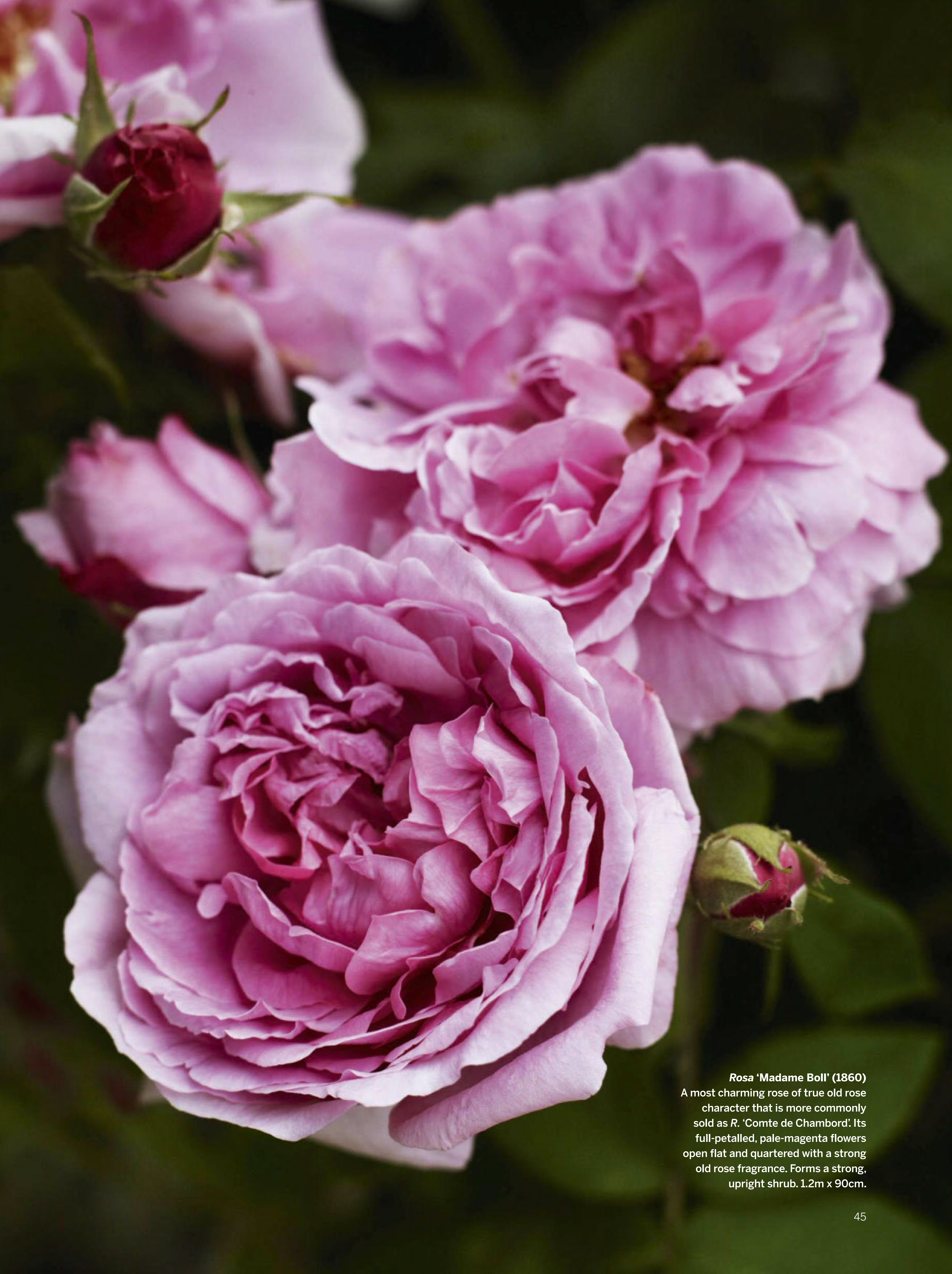


SCENT AND SENSIBILITY

After a lifetime spent working in the perfume industry, scent expert Robert Calkin followed his nose to David Austin Roses to tackle one of the greatest challenges of his career: to classify the smell of roses

WORDS **MARTIN STOTT** PHOTOGRAPHS **ANDREW MONTGOMERY**



***Rosa* 'Madame Boll' (1860)**
A most charming rose of true old rose character that is more commonly sold as *R.* 'Comte de Chambord'. Its full-petalled, pale-magenta flowers open flat and quartered with a strong old rose fragrance. Forms a strong, upright shrub. 1.2m x 90cm.

Everyone knows that roses smell beautiful, but how many of us linger to inhale the different fragrances until the notes of each plant become a familiar melody? If you were led round your garden blindfolded, could you identify your roses purely by their scent?

One man who might succeed is Robert Calkin – one of the world's great scent experts. Eighty-four-year-old Robert spent 40 years as a 'nose-to-hire' in the perfume industry, teaching the skills required to understand and create scents for perfumes and laundry products. Twenty years ago, he was approached by rosarian David Austin and asked for help in classifying accurately the scents of roses created at the Albrighton nursery in the West Midlands.

Though a reasonably keen sense of smell is a primary prerequisite for any career in perfumery, much of the skill lies in what the brain does with odour perceptions and the development of an 'odour memory'. Any trainee perfumer will quickly learn to recognise the 200 or so main perfumery materials. For Robert, learning to smell roses required patience and laying down new odour memories. "I went up to Albrighton for three days and I was completely at sea. I didn't know what I was smelling – all these wonderful and complex scents," he says. He was not helped by the fact that roses tend to be at their peak for just a few weeks in June. "For about three years I spent two or three weeks in the Austin gardens, while the roses were flowering. I was just smelling and smelling until eventually a pattern formed and I was able to produce a basic classification of rose fragrance."

One of the challenges was that there is no definitive vocabulary for describing scents. Each of us categorises fragrances by associations that are often very personal. Our ability accurately to recall smell in the same way as we re-experience music or visual images is limited. Robert developed a suggested classification of five main types of rose fragrance – fruity, tea, myrrh, musk and old rose – with common associations that might help the gardener to appreciate the nuances of each flower.

He also developed a passion for rose history because he wanted to know where the scents came from. "I've found that roses over 100 years old have much purer scents than many of the modern ones," he says. "You can easily pick up the fragrance of a gallica or a pure tea rose. As roses became more hybridised, the scents became more mixed. In the last century modern breeders concentrated so much on colours, hardiness and disease resistance, that fragrance was overlooked. It was like mixing colours – mix two together and it looks beautiful but if you add a third, or a fourth or fifth, you end up with brown. All the individuality goes. I think with a lot of modern roses the fragrance has simply become too complicated."

A brief guide to scent

Fruity Many fruity notes are found in roses derived from crosses between the old European roses and ancient roses from China. Notable are the bourbon roses, which fall into two groups: fresh and slightly grassy, and warm and heady. Fruity notes are also found in many of the noisette roses. Look for citrus, apple, pear, raspberry, strawberry, peach, apricot, melon, grape, lychee and guava.

Tea Found in roses originating in China. Typically tarry, earthy, humid fragrances, often with a rich violet character, and in its purest form, reminiscent of China tea. Occasional fruity hints of apricot.

Myrrh Sweet anise-like fragrance often associated with old rose, but sometimes tea in modern roses.

Musk Three main fragrances derive from the stamens – clove, aldehydic (as in orange peel) and cut grass/banana – often in combination with fragrance from the petals.

Old rose The typical fragrance we think of as rose. Associated with the old European gallica roses, descended from the wild *Rosa gallica*, and their descendants, the damasks, centifolias and albas. Found also in rugosa roses from China and Japan. In many we find hints of lemon, almond, honey, hyacinth and watercress, and, from the stamens, clove and cinnamon (sometimes cucumber in the rugosas). □

USEFUL INFORMATION

David Austin Roses, Bowling Green Lane, Albrighton, Wolverhampton WV7 3HB.
Tel 01902 376300, davidaustinroses.co.uk

Turn the page for some of Robert's favourite scented roses

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society. †Hardiness ratings given where available.

FRUITY

In the fruity category is 'Madame Isaac Péreire', a deep-pink bourbon with a warm, powerful fragrance. "Someone once described it as smelling like a French boudoir – not an association I can lay claim to," says Robert. Then there's the important historic rose, Parson's pink China, also known as Old Blush (now named *R.* x *odorata* 'Pallida'). "It's an unassuming rose, introduced into Europe from China in 1789," says Robert. "It was crossed with a number of European roses to give many of the most important groups of roses grown today. It is very shy about producing its own fragrance and when it does it smells of sweet pea, but it was largely responsible for the repeat flowering of modern roses and for the introduction of fruity fragrances."

Standing beside 'Madame Alfred Carrière' – the climbing noisette bred by Schwarz in 1879 – Robert explains how the age of the flower can affect the scent. "That's an interesting example of a fruity smell," he says. "It's got a lovely, light old rose, fresh, clean, beautiful fragrance, slightly citrus – a little bit lemon. As it ages it goes to grapefruit and then to blackcurrant. And as it ages even further it can smell of cat pee. In fact grapefruit, blackcurrant and cat pee are all chemically related."

***Rosa* 'Madame Isaac Péreire' (1881)**
Huge, fuchsia, cup-shaped flowers, the petals eventually turning back prettily at the edges. Powerful and delicious fragrance. A large, vigorous, repeat-flowering shrub with open growth. 1.5m x 1.2m. AGM[*]. RHS H5[†].

***Rosa* Graham Thomas (='Ausmas') (1983)** A David Austin rose with a light tea fragrance. Medium-sized, cupped blooms of an unusually rich, pure yellow along with smooth green foliage. It forms a bushy, upright and vigorous shrub. 1.2m x 1.2m. AGM. RHS H6.

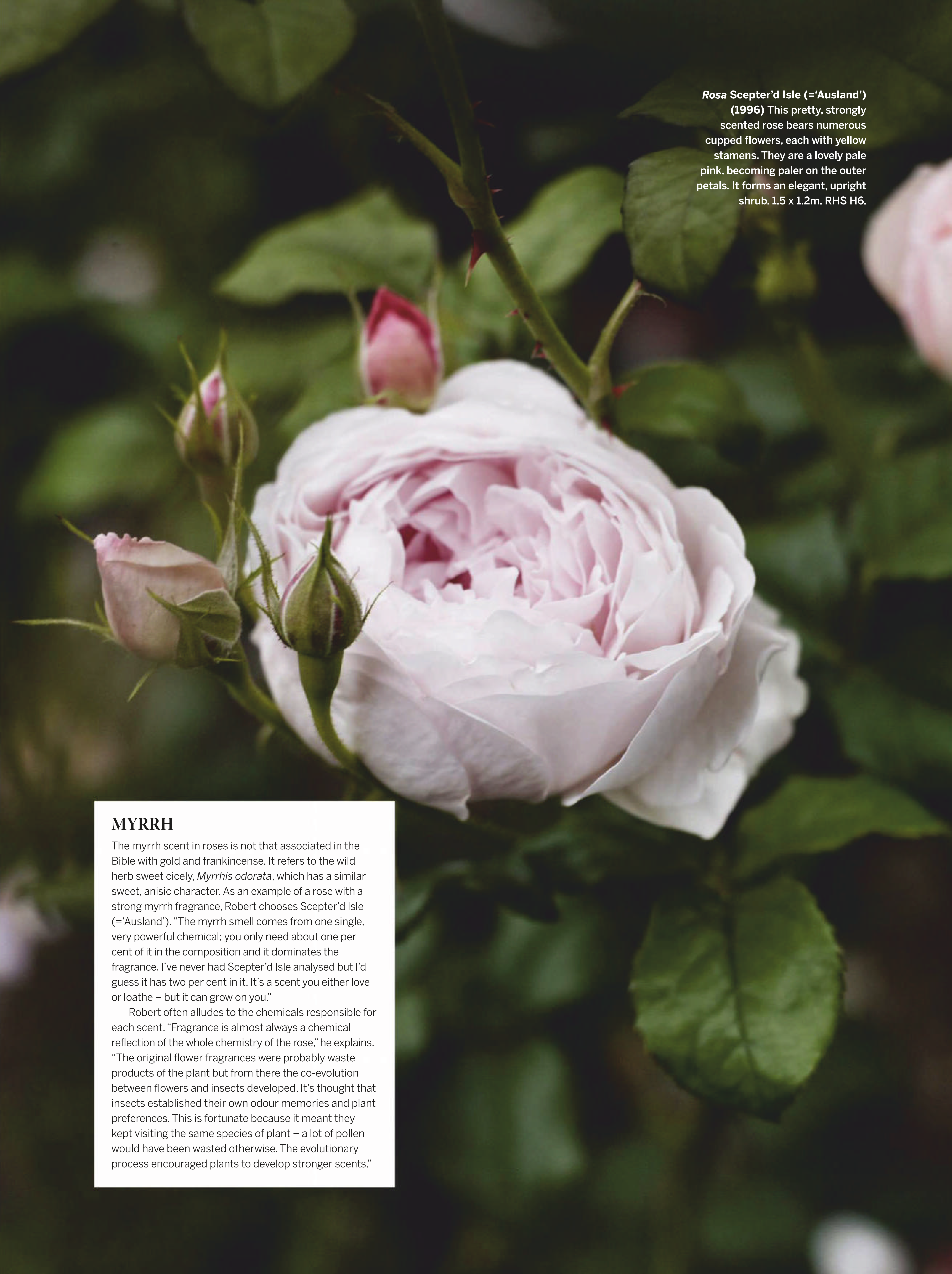
NICOLA STOCKEN / GAP PHOTOS

TEA

"The first tea roses were imported from China at the beginning of the 19th century," says Robert. "There are a number of accounts for how the name came about. The first was that they came from the famous Fa Tee gardens in China. Others said they were called tea roses because the seedlings were shipped over on the old tea clippers. The obvious explanation is quite simply that they smelled of tea and that was recognised very early on when they were often described as 'tea-scented roses' rather than simply 'tea roses'.

"My ultimate authority is *The Rose Fancier's Manual* written by Catherine Gore," says Robert. "In it she describes the yellow tea rose of Guerin as 'very agreeably scented with the aroma of Pekoe tea'. That was written in 1838 and they only came over in around 1809. I would agree with her. To me they smell of a freshly opened packet of China tea. They have a sort of tarry smell that is completely unrelated to the European roses – chemically absolutely different – and the smell must have evolved completely differently."

The tea scent is often associated with yellow and orange flower colour.



***Rosa* Scepter'd Isle (='Ausland') (1996)** This pretty, strongly scented rose bears numerous cupped flowers, each with yellow stamens. They are a lovely pale pink, becoming paler on the outer petals. It forms an elegant, upright shrub. 1.5 x 1.2m. RHS H6.

MYRRH

The myrrh scent in roses is not that associated in the Bible with gold and frankincense. It refers to the wild herb sweet cicely, *Myrrhis odorata*, which has a similar sweet, anisic character. As an example of a rose with a strong myrrh fragrance, Robert chooses Scepter'd Isle (='Ausland'). "The myrrh smell comes from one single, very powerful chemical; you only need about one per cent of it in the composition and it dominates the fragrance. I've never had Scepter'd Isle analysed but I'd guess it has two per cent in it. It's a scent you either love or loathe – but it can grow on you."

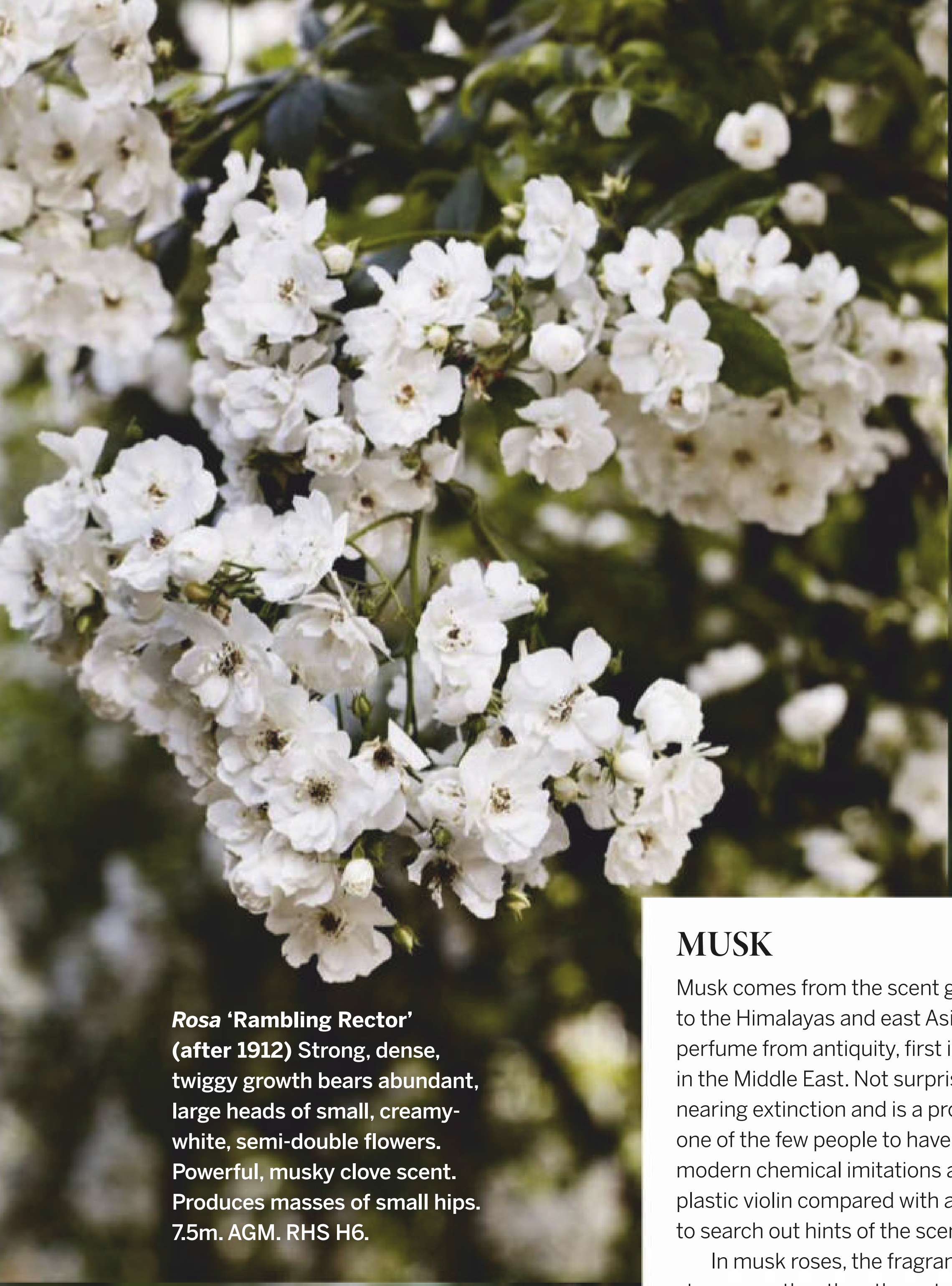
Robert often alludes to the chemicals responsible for each scent. "Fragrance is almost always a chemical reflection of the whole chemistry of the rose," he explains. "The original flower fragrances were probably waste products of the plant but from there the co-evolution between flowers and insects developed. It's thought that insects established their own odour memories and plant preferences. This is fortunate because it meant they kept visiting the same species of plant – a lot of pollen would have been wasted otherwise. The evolutionary process encouraged plants to develop stronger scents."

MUSK

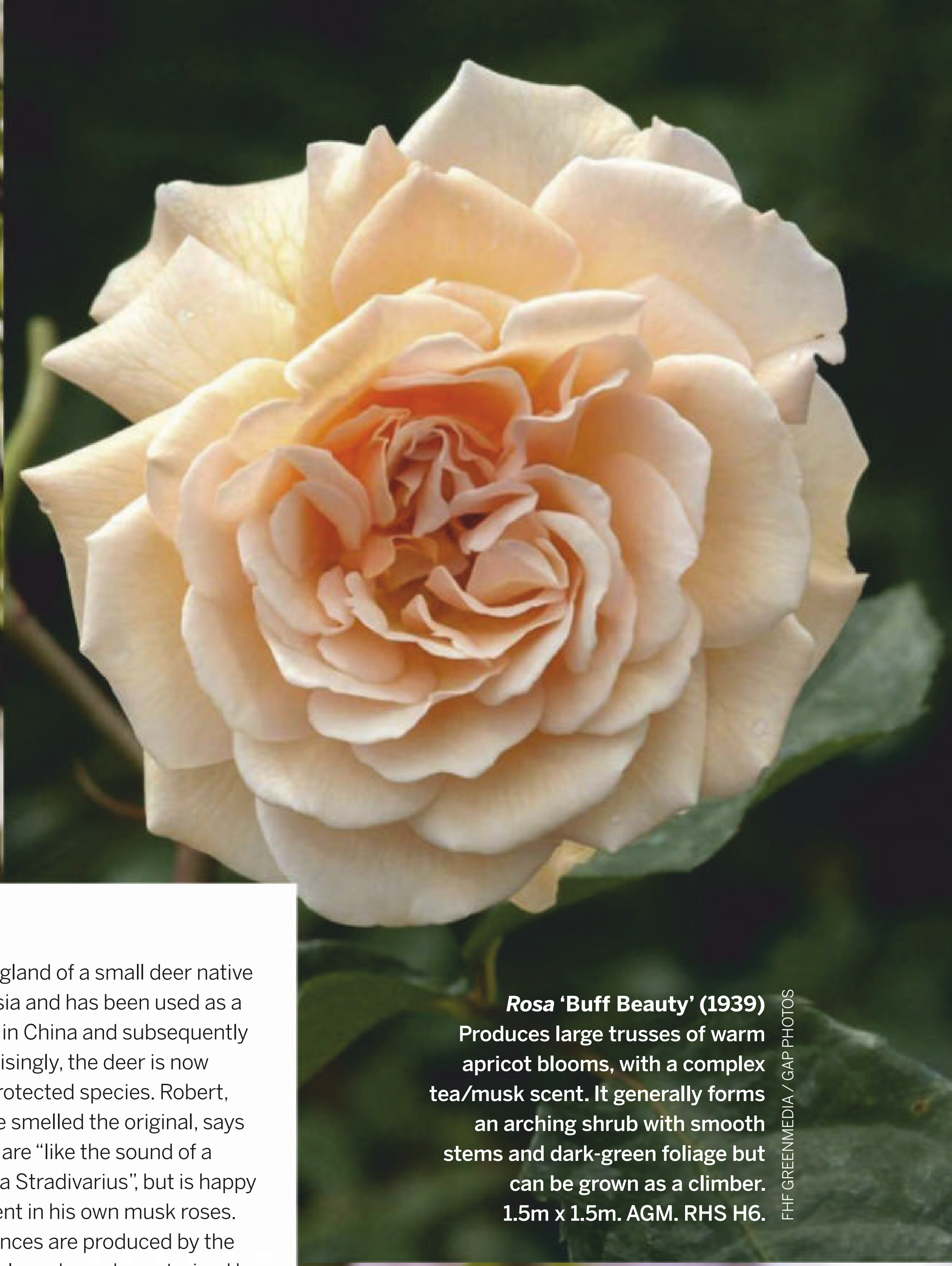
Musk comes from the scent gland of a small deer native to the Himalayas and east Asia and has been used as a perfume from antiquity, first in China and subsequently in the Middle East. Not surprisingly, the deer is now nearing extinction and is a protected species. Robert, one of the few people to have smelled the original, says modern chemical imitations are "like the sound of a plastic violin compared with a Stradivarius", but is happy to search out hints of the scent in his own musk roses.

In musk roses, the fragrances are produced by the stamens rather than the petals and are characterised by a prominent clove character similar to that in dianthus and carnation. Another type of musk fragrance is that of the wild field rose, thought to be the 'musk rose' beloved of Shakespeare. Here, Robert says, the fragrance is "almost pungent, or aldehydic, as in orange peel".

In many roses, a musk fragrance coming from the stamens mingles with the fragrance coming from the petals, as, for example, in the hybrid musk, 'Buff Beauty', which Robert says smells of musk, old rose, tea and violets. "It's a complex but very beautiful fragrance and would be a candidate for my desert island selection."

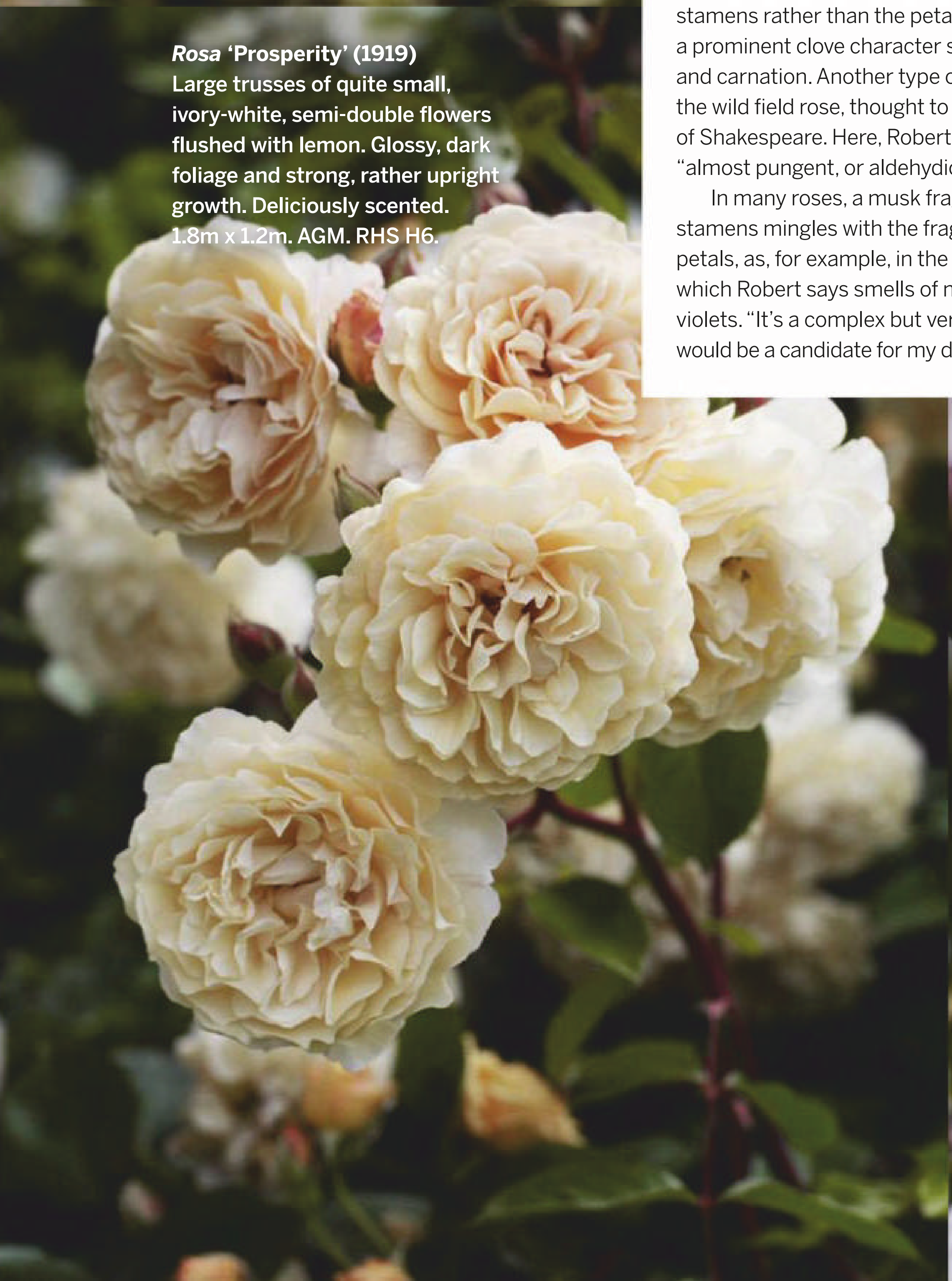


***Rosa* 'Rambling Rector' (after 1912)** Strong, dense, twiggy growth bears abundant, large heads of small, creamy-white, semi-double flowers. Powerful, musky clove scent. Produces masses of small hips. 7.5m. AGM. RHS H6.

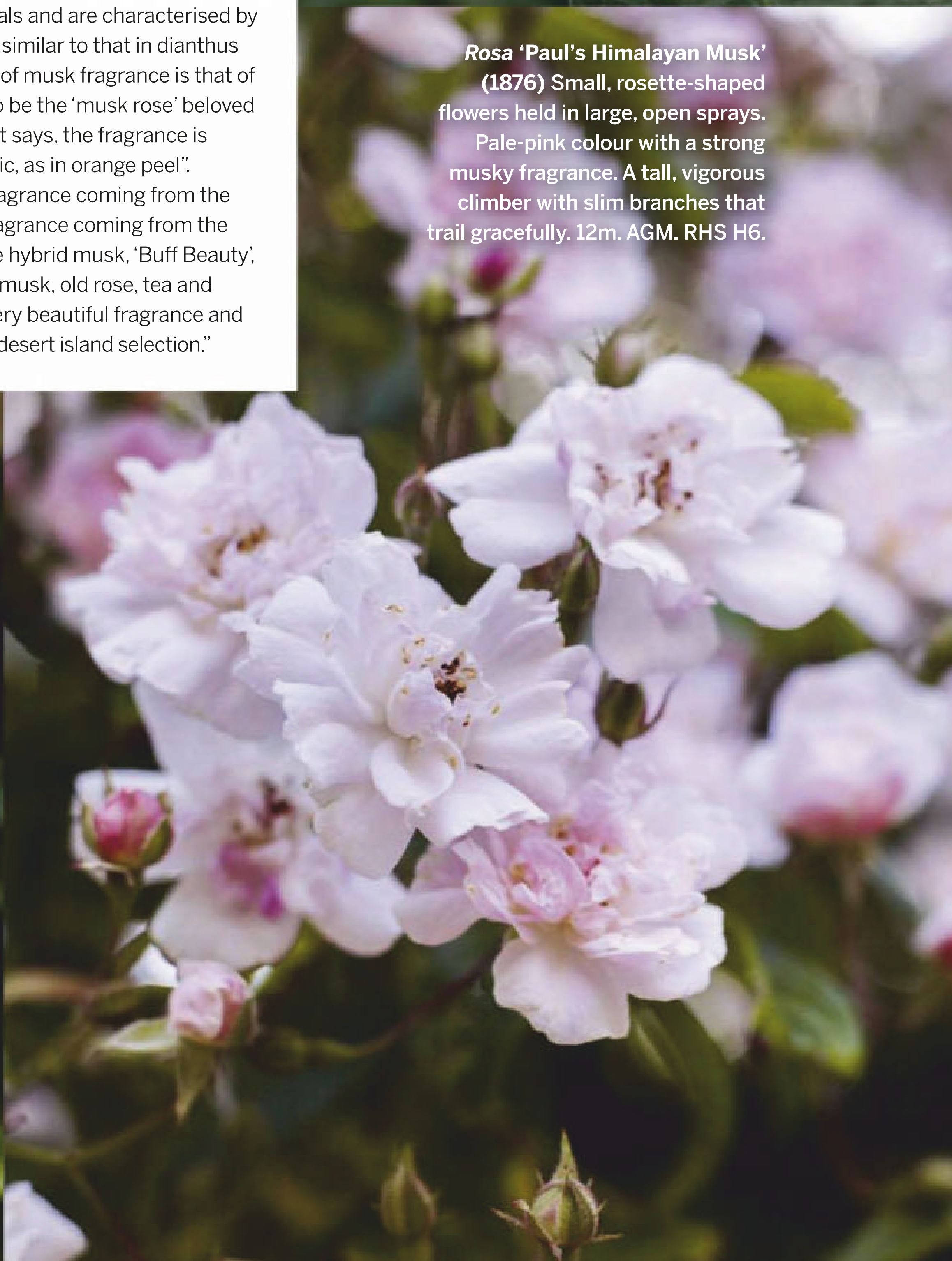


***Rosa* 'Buff Beauty' (1939)** Produces large trusses of warm apricot blooms, with a complex tea/musk scent. It generally forms an arching shrub with smooth stems and dark-green foliage but can be grown as a climber. 1.5m x 1.5m. AGM. RHS H6.

FHF GREENMEDIA / GAP PHOTOS



***Rosa* 'Prosperity' (1919)** Large trusses of quite small, ivory-white, semi-double flowers flushed with lemon. Glossy, dark foliage and strong, rather upright growth. Deliciously scented. 1.8m x 1.2m. AGM. RHS H6.



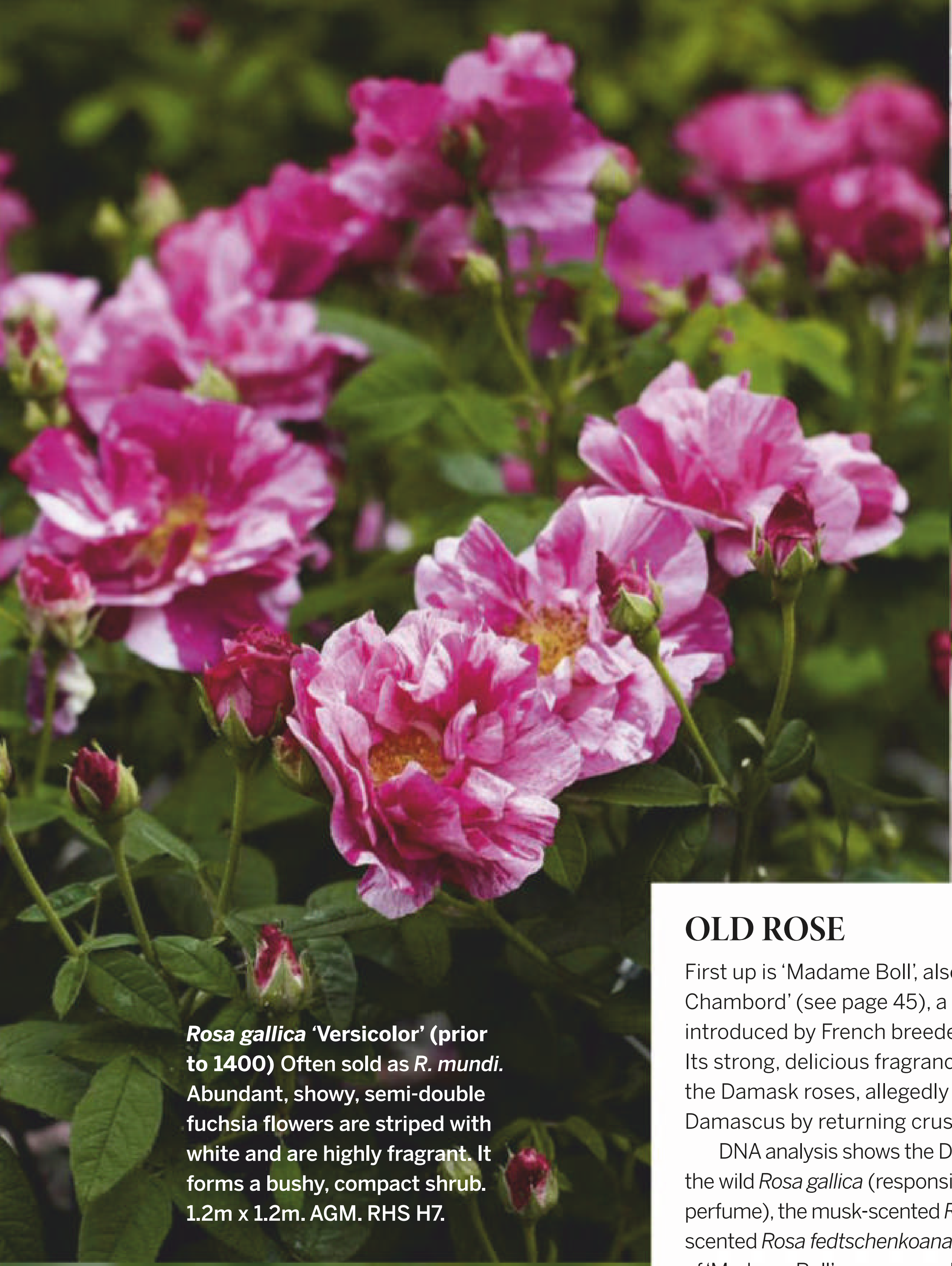
***Rosa* 'Paul's Himalayan Musk' (1876)** Small, rosette-shaped flowers held in large, open sprays. Pale-pink colour with a strong musky fragrance. A tall, vigorous climber with slim branches that trail gracefully. 12m. AGM. RHS H6.

OLD ROSE

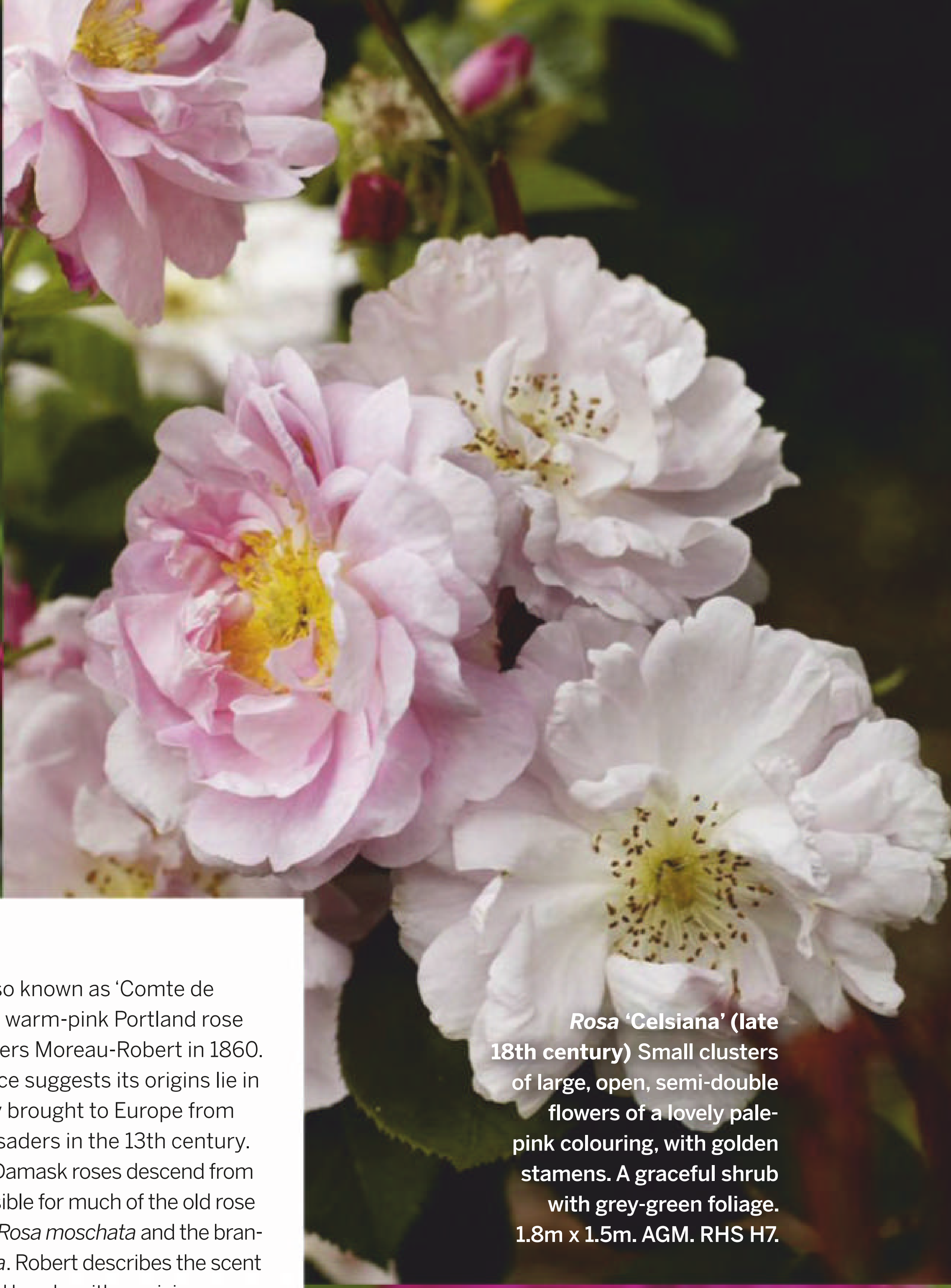
First up is 'Madame Boll', also known as 'Comte de Chambord' (see page 45), a warm-pink Portland rose introduced by French breeders Moreau-Robert in 1860. Its strong, delicious fragrance suggests its origins lie in the Damask roses, allegedly brought to Europe from Damascus by returning crusaders in the 13th century.

DNA analysis shows the Damask roses descend from the wild *Rosa gallica* (responsible for much of the old rose perfume), the musk-scented *Rosa moschata* and the bran-scented *Rosa fedtschenkoana*. Robert describes the scent of 'Madame Boll' as warm and heady, with a spiciness coming from the *moschata* and *fedtschenkoana* ancestors.

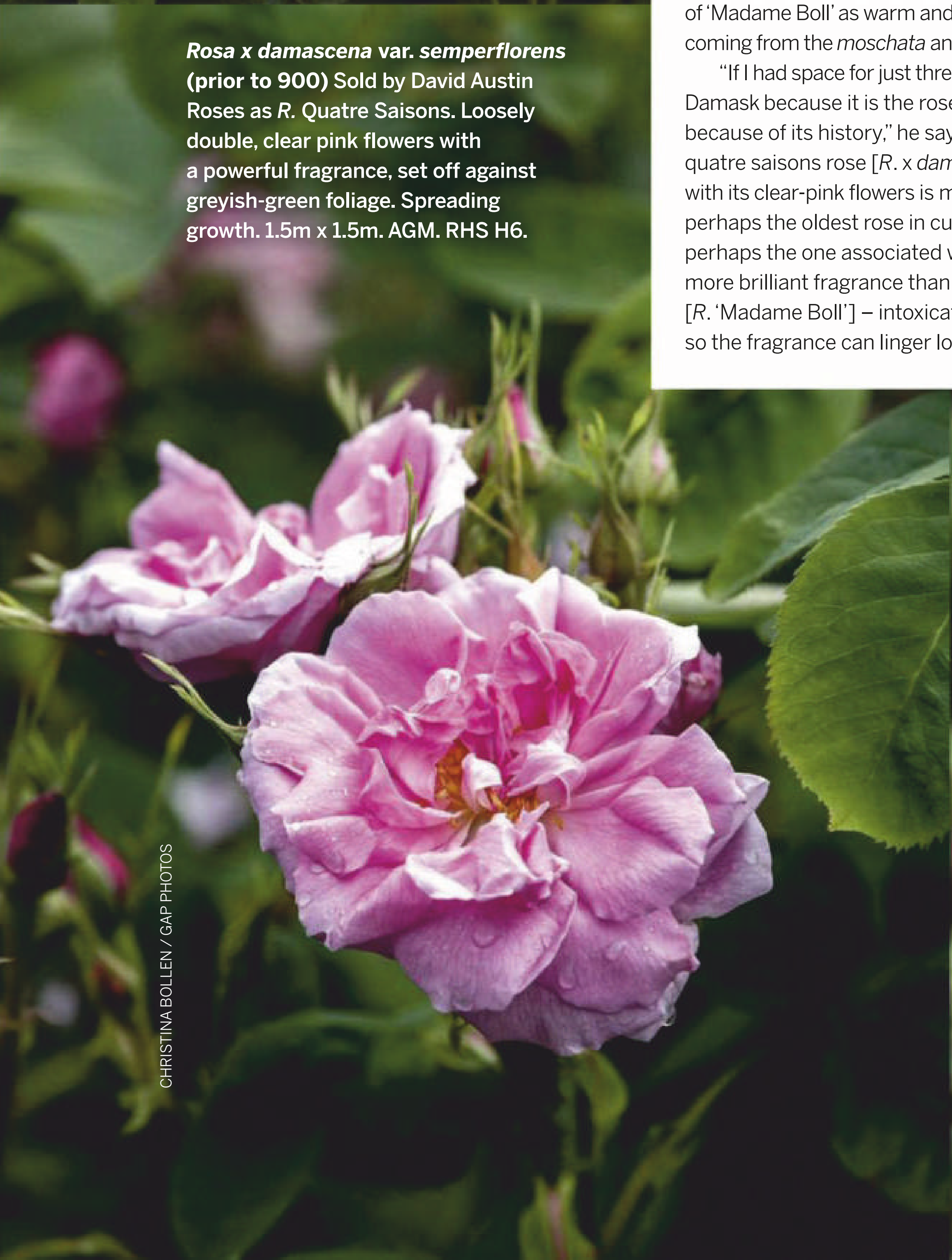
"If I had space for just three roses, I'd have to include a Damask because it is the rose used in perfumery and because of its history," he says. "For fragrance, the quatre saisons rose [*R*. x *damascena* var. *semperflorens*] with its clear-pink flowers is my number one rose. It is perhaps the oldest rose in cultivation and I like to think perhaps the one associated with Cleopatra. It has a more brilliant fragrance than 'Comte de Chambord' [*R*. 'Madame Boll'] – intoxicating." It repeat flowers too, so the fragrance can linger longer in your memory.



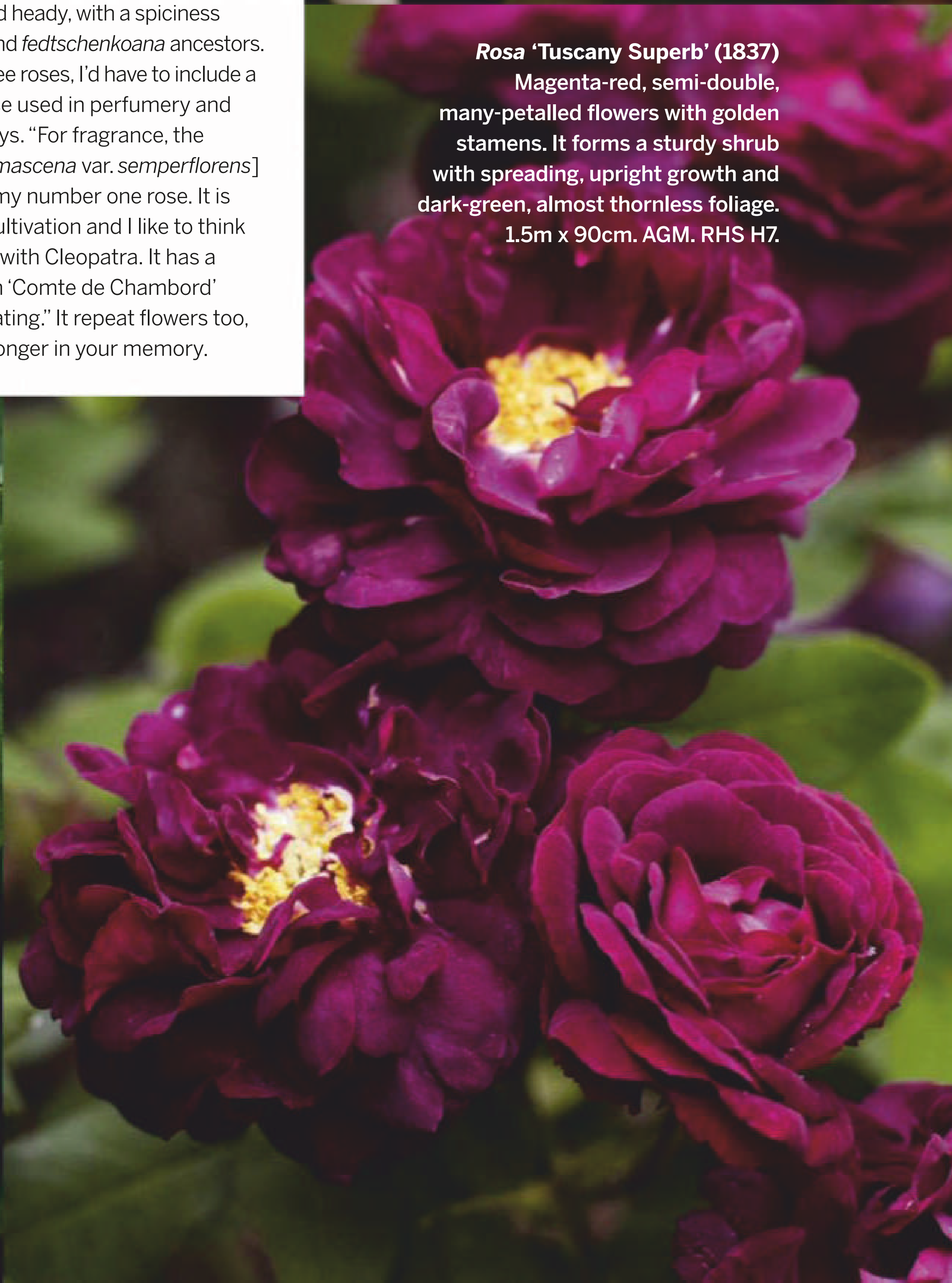
***Rosa gallica* 'Versicolor' (prior to 1400)** Often sold as *R. mundi.* Abundant, showy, semi-double fuchsia flowers are striped with white and are highly fragrant. It forms a bushy, compact shrub. 1.2m x 1.2m. AGM. RHS H7.



***Rosa* 'Celsiana' (late 18th century)** Small clusters of large, open, semi-double flowers of a lovely pale-pink colouring, with golden stamens. A graceful shrub with grey-green foliage. 1.8m x 1.5m. AGM. RHS H7.

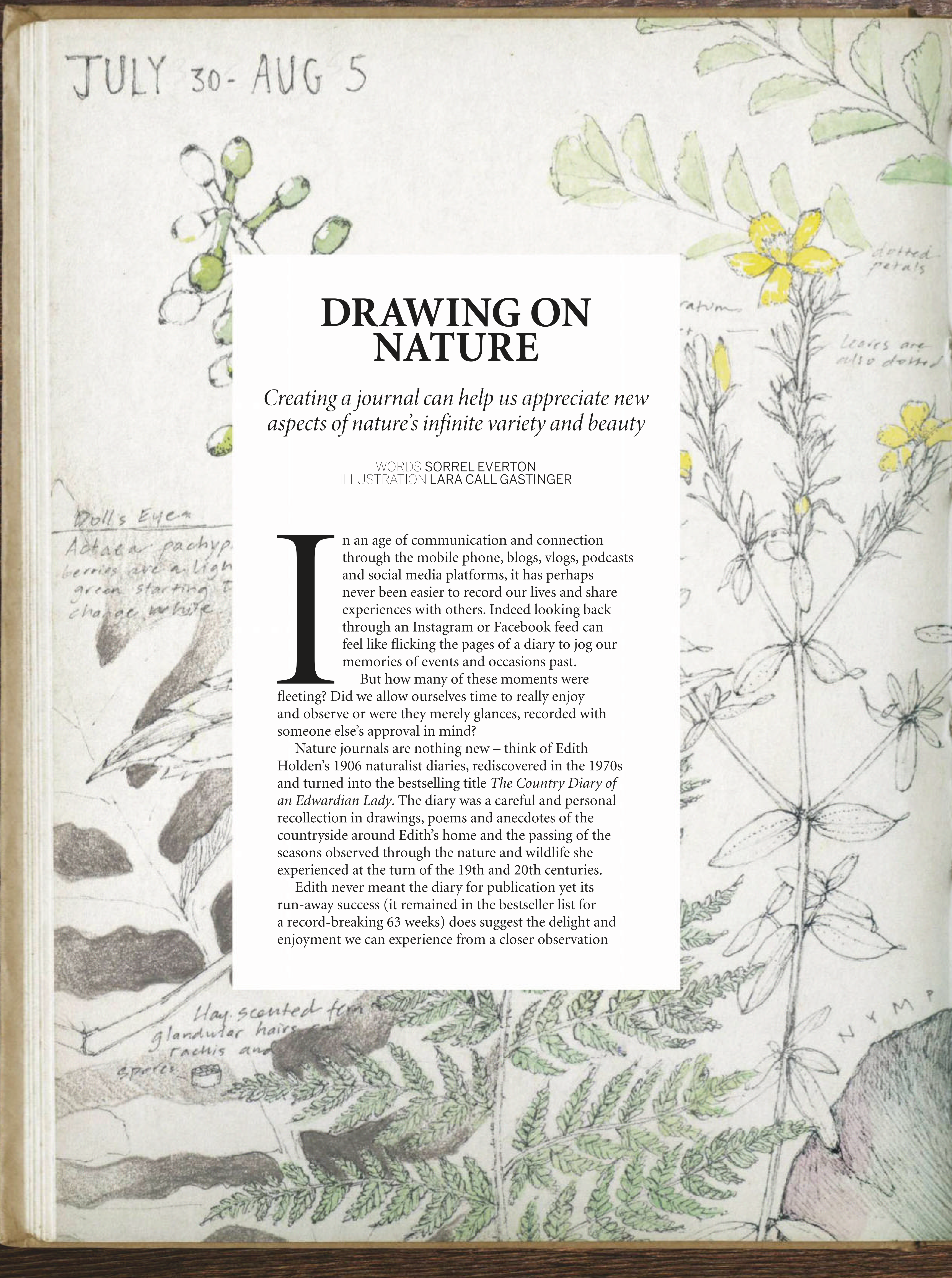


***Rosa x damascena* var. *semperflorens* (prior to 900)** Sold by David Austin Roses as *R.* Quatre Saisons. Loosely double, clear pink flowers with a powerful fragrance, set off against greyish-green foliage. Spreading growth. 1.5m x 1.5m. AGM. RHS H6.



***Rosa* 'Tuscany Superb' (1837)** Magenta-red, semi-double, many-petalled flowers with golden stamens. It forms a sturdy shrub with spreading, upright growth and dark-green, almost thornless foliage. 1.5m x 90cm. AGM. RHS H7.

CHRISTINA BOLLEN / GAP PHOTOS


JULY 30- AUG 5
dotted petals
ratum
leaves are also dotted
Doll's Eyes
Actaea pachyp
berries are a ligh
green starting t
change white
Hay-scented fern
glandular hairs
rachis and
spores
NYMP

DRAWING ON NATURE

Creating a journal can help us appreciate new aspects of nature's infinite variety and beauty

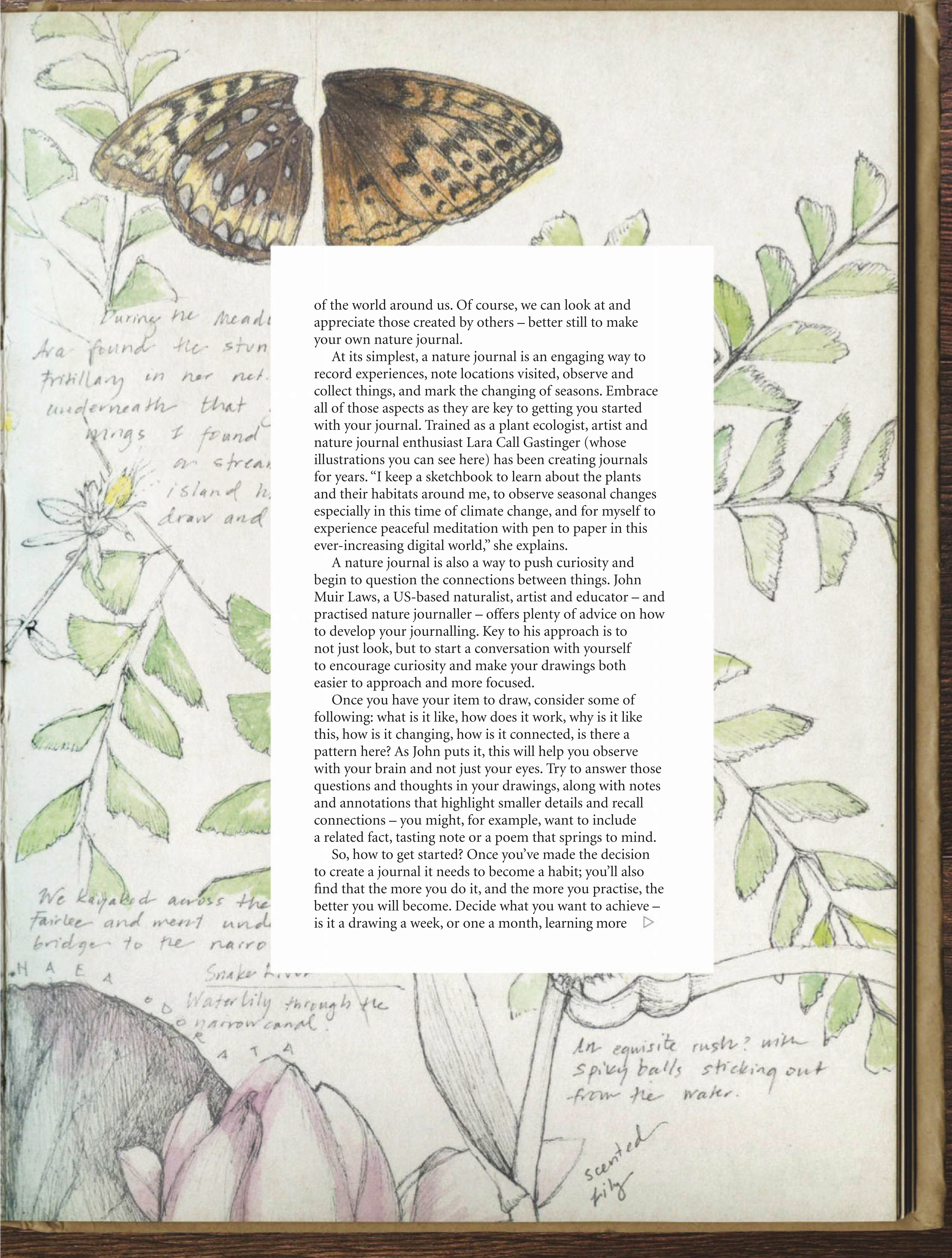
WORDS SORREL EVERTON
ILLUSTRATION LARA CALL GASTINGER

In an age of communication and connection through the mobile phone, blogs, vlogs, podcasts and social media platforms, it has perhaps never been easier to record our lives and share experiences with others. Indeed looking back through an Instagram or Facebook feed can feel like flicking the pages of a diary to jog our memories of events and occasions past.

But how many of these moments were fleeting? Did we allow ourselves time to really enjoy and observe or were they merely glances, recorded with someone else's approval in mind?

Nature journals are nothing new – think of Edith Holden's 1906 naturalist diaries, rediscovered in the 1970s and turned into the bestselling title *The Country Diary of an Edwardian Lady*. The diary was a careful and personal recollection in drawings, poems and anecdotes of the countryside around Edith's home and the passing of the seasons observed through the nature and wildlife she experienced at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries.

Edith never meant the diary for publication yet its run-away success (it remained in the bestseller list for a record-breaking 63 weeks) does suggest the delight and enjoyment we can experience from a closer observation


During the mead
Ara found the stun
fritillary in her net.
underneath that
wings I found
on strea
island h
draw and
We kayaked across the
Fairlee and went und
bridge to the narro
Snake River
Waterlily through the
narrow canal.
N Y M P H A E A
O D O R A T A
An equisite rush? with
spiky balls sticking out
from the water.
scented
lily

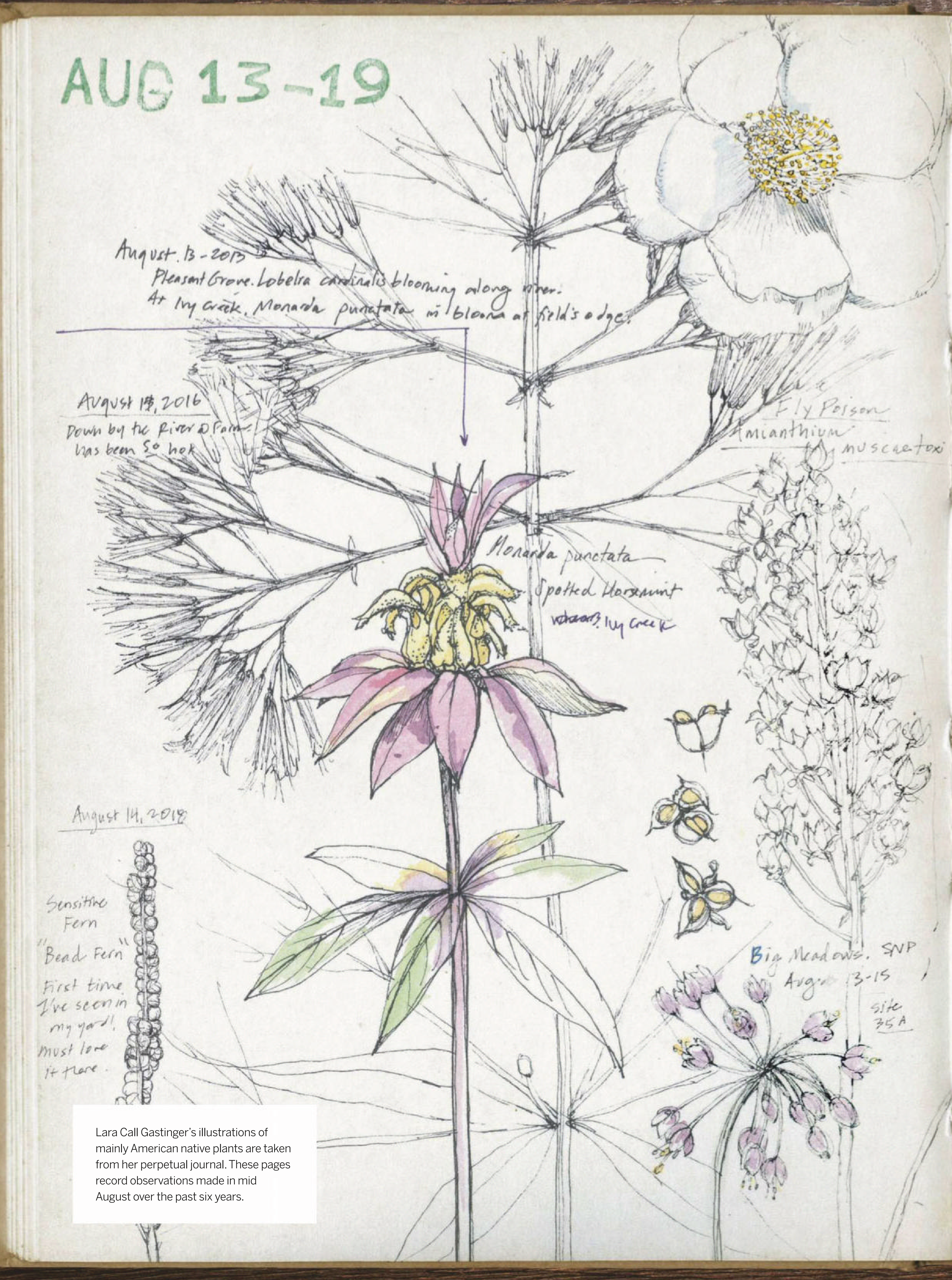
of the world around us. Of course, we can look at and appreciate those created by others – better still to make your own nature journal.

At its simplest, a nature journal is an engaging way to record experiences, note locations visited, observe and collect things, and mark the changing of seasons. Embrace all of those aspects as they are key to getting you started with your journal. Trained as a plant ecologist, artist and nature journal enthusiast Lara Call Gastinger (whose illustrations you can see here) has been creating journals for years. "I keep a sketchbook to learn about the plants and their habitats around me, to observe seasonal changes especially in this time of climate change, and for myself to experience peaceful meditation with pen to paper in this ever-increasing digital world," she explains.

A nature journal is also a way to push curiosity and begin to question the connections between things. John Muir Laws, a US-based naturalist, artist and educator – and practised nature journaller – offers plenty of advice on how to develop your journalling. Key to his approach is to not just look, but to start a conversation with yourself to encourage curiosity and make your drawings both easier to approach and more focused.

Once you have your item to draw, consider some of following: what is it like, how does it work, why is it like this, how is it changing, how is it connected, is there a pattern here? As John puts it, this will help you observe with your brain and not just your eyes. Try to answer those questions and thoughts in your drawings, along with notes and annotations that highlight smaller details and recall connections – you might, for example, want to include a related fact, tasting note or a poem that springs to mind.

So, how to get started? Once you've made the decision to create a journal it needs to become a habit; you'll also find that the more you do it, and the more you practise, the better you will become. Decide what you want to achieve – is it a drawing a week, or one a month, learning more ▷



AUG 13-19

August. 13 - 2013
Pleasant Grove. Lobelia cardinalis blooming along river.
At Ivy Creek. Monarda punctata in bloom at field's edge.

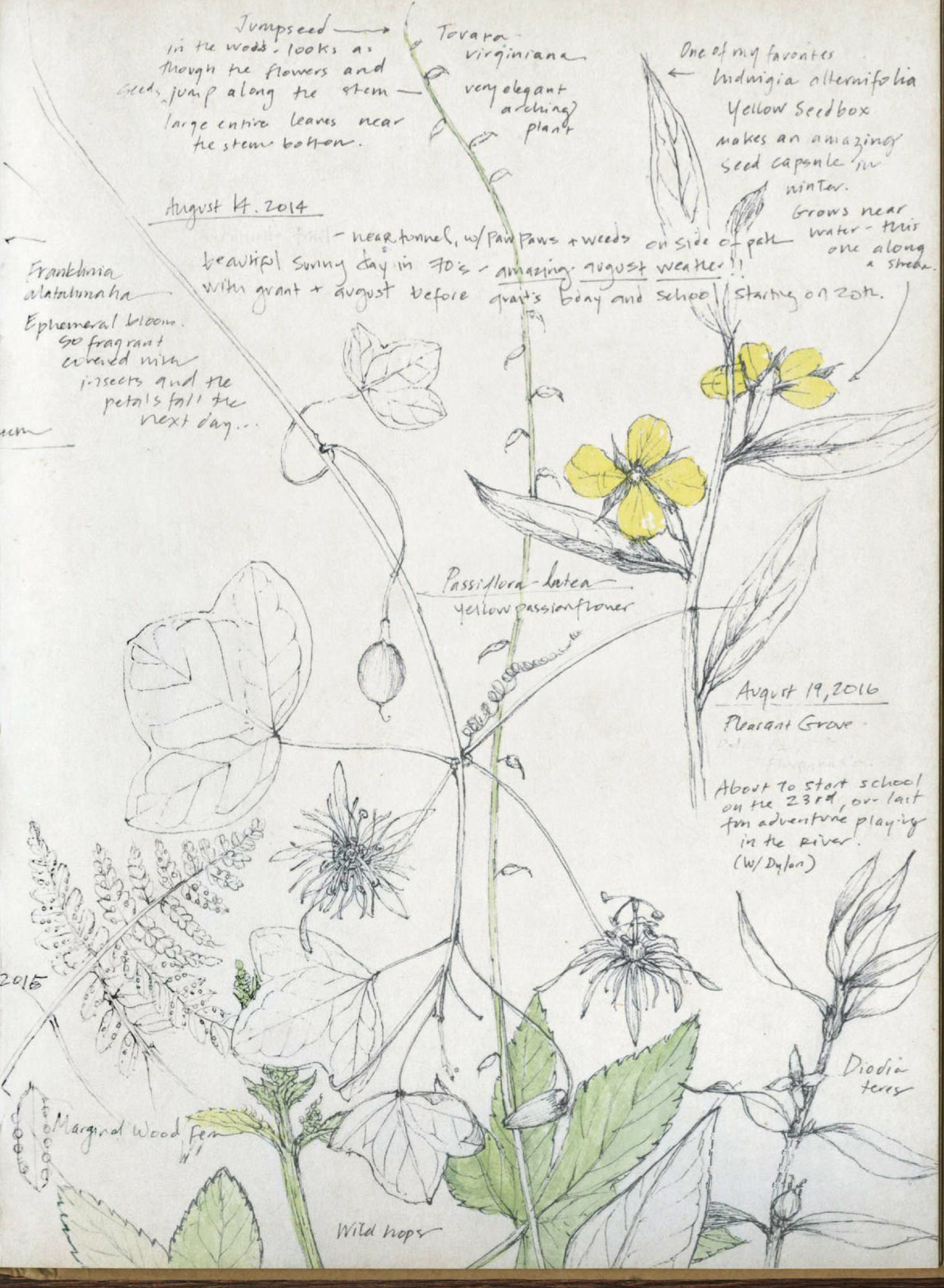
August 14, 2016
Down by the River @ Farm -
has been so hot

August 14, 2018
Sensitive Fern
"Bead Fern"
First time I've seen in my yard! must love it here.

Big Meadows. SNP
August 13-15
site 35A

Fly Poison
Amianthium muscaetoxi
Monarda punctata
Spotted Horsemint
Ivy Creek

Lara Call Gastinger's illustrations of mainly American native plants are taken from her perpetual journal. These pages record observations made in mid August over the past six years.



Jumpseed

in the woods. looks as though the flowers and seeds jump along the stem — large entire leaves near the stem bottom.

Tovara virginiana

very elegant arching plant

One of my favorites

Ludwigia alternifolia

Yellow Seedbox

makes an amazing seed capsule in winter.

Grows near water - this one along a stream.

August 14. 2014

- near tunnel, w/ Paw Paws + weeds on side of path

beautiful sunny day in 70's - amazing august weather!!

with grant + august before grant's bday and school starting on 20th.

Franklinia alatamaha

Ephemeral bloom. So fragrant covered with insects and the petals fall the next day...

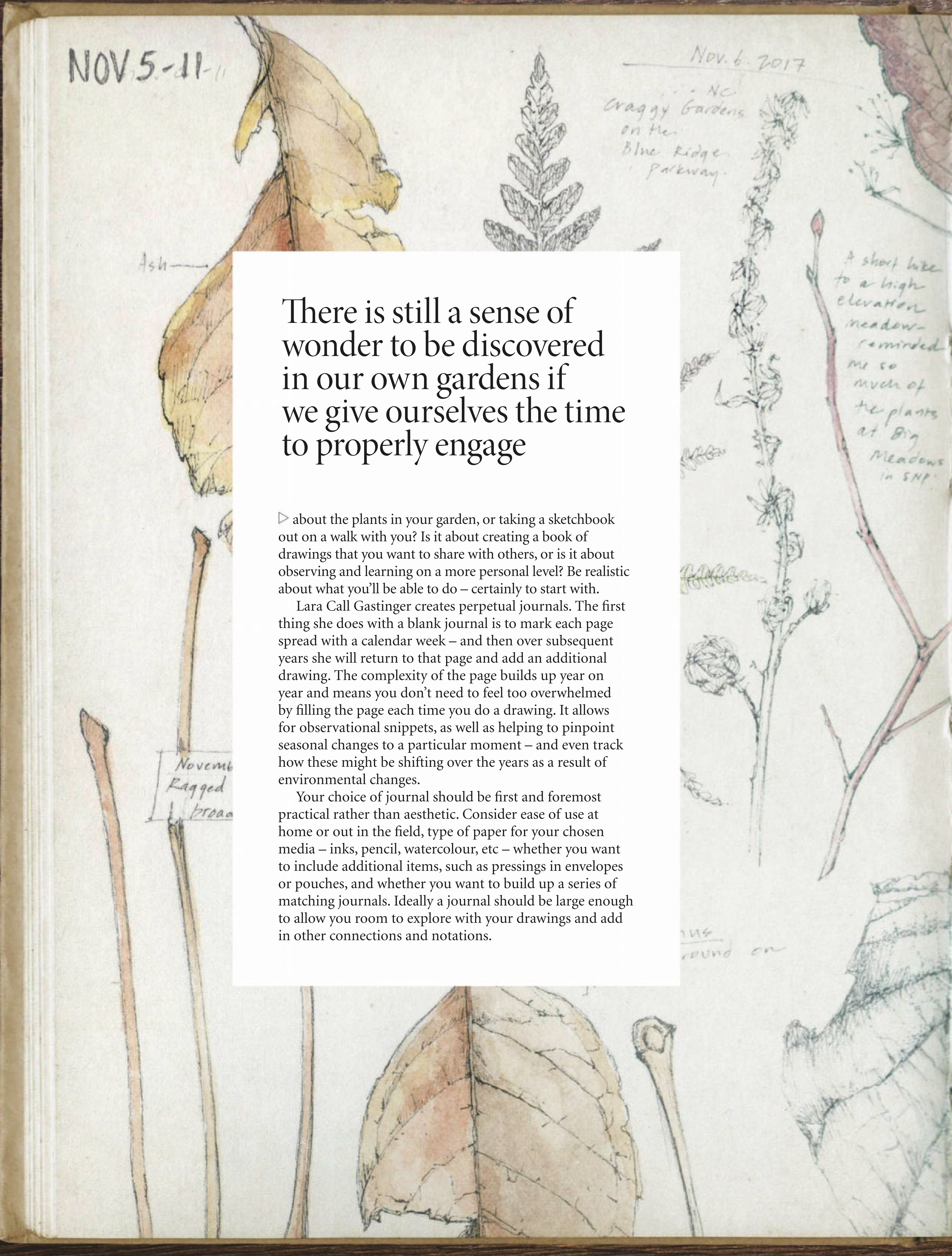
Passiflora lutea

yellow passionflower

August 19, 2016

Pleasant Grove

About to start school on the 23rd, our last fun adventure playing in the river! (W/ Dylan)

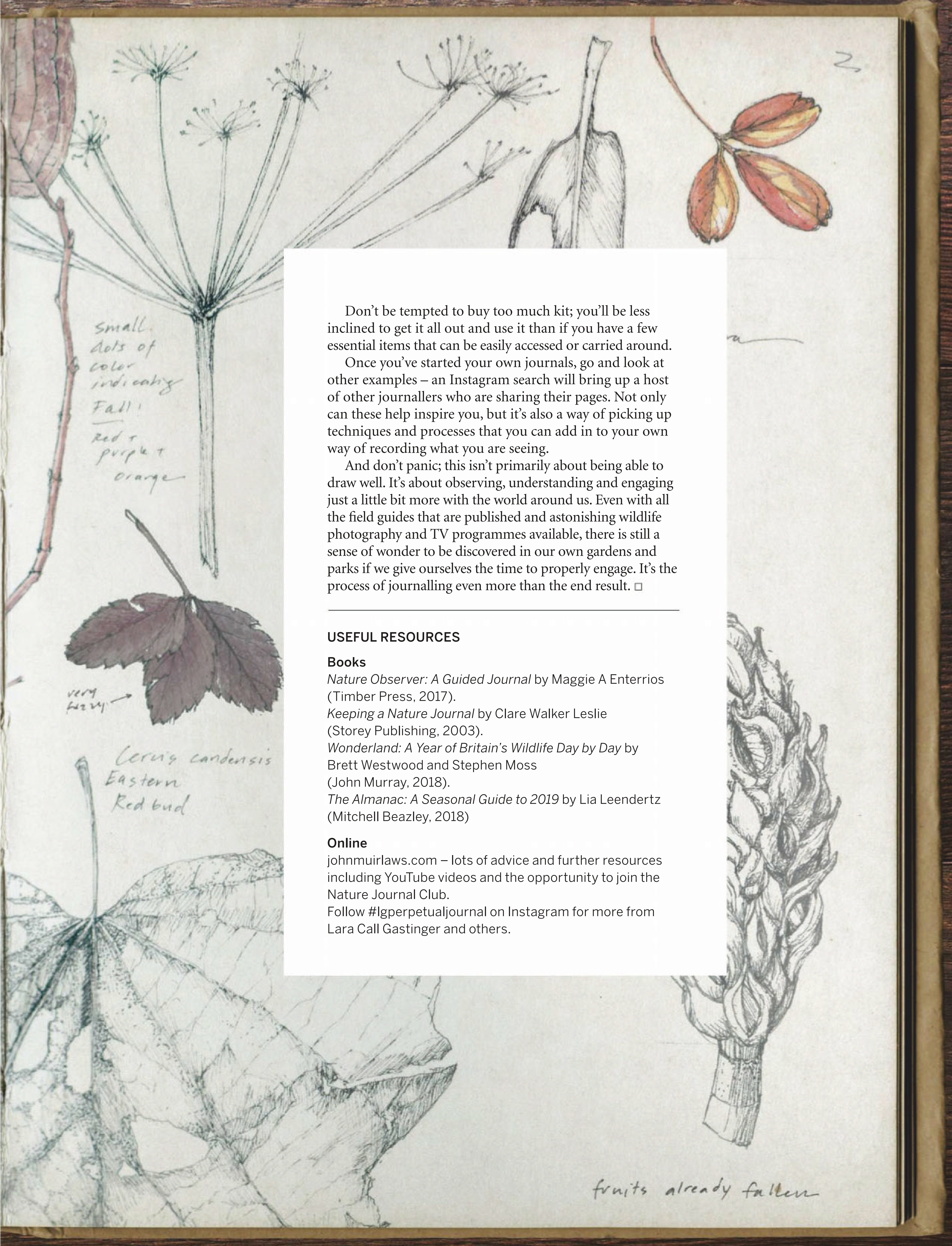

NOV 5-11
Nov. 6. 2017
NC
Craggy Gardens
on the
Blue Ridge
Parkway.
Ash
A short hike
to a high
elevation
meadow -
reminded
me so
much of
the plants
at Big
Meadows
in SNP.
Novemb
Ragged
broad
nus
round on

There is still a sense of wonder to be discovered in our own gardens if we give ourselves the time to properly engage

▷ about the plants in your garden, or taking a sketchbook out on a walk with you? Is it about creating a book of drawings that you want to share with others, or is it about observing and learning on a more personal level? Be realistic about what you'll be able to do – certainly to start with.

Lara Call Gastinger creates perpetual journals. The first thing she does with a blank journal is to mark each page spread with a calendar week – and then over subsequent years she will return to that page and add an additional drawing. The complexity of the page builds up year on year and means you don't need to feel too overwhelmed by filling the page each time you do a drawing. It allows for observational snippets, as well as helping to pinpoint seasonal changes to a particular moment – and even track how these might be shifting over the years as a result of environmental changes.

Your choice of journal should be first and foremost practical rather than aesthetic. Consider ease of use at home or out in the field, type of paper for your chosen media – inks, pencil, watercolour, etc – whether you want to include additional items, such as pressings in envelopes or pouches, and whether you want to build up a series of matching journals. Ideally a journal should be large enough to allow you room to explore with your drawings and add in other connections and notations.



Don’t be tempted to buy too much kit; you’ll be less inclined to get it all out and use it than if you have a few essential items that can be easily accessed or carried around.

Once you’ve started your own journals, go and look at other examples – an Instagram search will bring up a host of other journallers who are sharing their pages. Not only can these help inspire you, but it’s also a way of picking up techniques and processes that you can add in to your own way of recording what you are seeing.

And don’t panic; this isn’t primarily about being able to draw well. It’s about observing, understanding and engaging just a little bit more with the world around us. Even with all the field guides that are published and astonishing wildlife photography and TV programmes available, there is still a sense of wonder to be discovered in our own gardens and parks if we give ourselves the time to properly engage. It’s the process of journalling even more than the end result. □

USEFUL RESOURCES

Books

Nature Observer: A Guided Journal by Maggie A Enterrios (Timber Press, 2017).
Keeping a Nature Journal by Clare Walker Leslie (Storey Publishing, 2003).
Wonderland: A Year of Britain’s Wildlife Day by Day by Brett Westwood and Stephen Moss (John Murray, 2018).
The Almanac: A Seasonal Guide to 2019 by Lia Leendertz (Mitchell Beazley, 2018)

Online

johnmuirlaws.com – lots of advice and further resources including YouTube videos and the opportunity to join the Nature Journal Club.
Follow #lgperpetualjournal on Instagram for more from Lara Call Gastinger and others.

The joyful planting in the garden at Aston Pottery is totally unexpected, not least because visitors, destined for the pottery, may not anticipate a garden at all, let alone one of such delight with vivacious, sometimes exotic, planting that is untypical of a Cotswold garden. Incredibly, this garden is transient, sown and grown from 120 packets of seed, all annuals, in 65 selected varieties. The garden is interwoven with plants of differing weights, heights and colours, and it feels very established. There are 20 different sunflower cultivars radiating from the back of the seven-metre-wide bed, including thickly feathered coppery *Amaranthus cruentus* 'Hot Biscuits' and dark-leaved, ruby *Amaranthus* 'Hopi Red Dye'. Upright *Cleome hassleriana* 'Violet Queen' jostles alongside golden *Tithonia rotundifolia* 'Fiesta del Sol' and *Rudbeckia hirta* 'Irish Eyes'. A vibrant inky heliotrope is paired with *Celosia argentea* var. *cristata* 'Golden Plume' in a kaleidoscope of colour.

Stephen Baughan and his wife Jane established Aston Pottery more than 30 years ago. They and their team now produce a wide portfolio of traditional, hand-decorated ceramics. Many of the designs are inspired by plants from the garden, including sunflowers and agapanthus. Imaginative, energetic, slightly impatient and with a passion for colour and design, Stephen sought to revolutionise the pottery's garden, and the immediacy of creating an almost instant, brilliant, annual border appealed.

"I love colour. There's no specific scheme, just no white," he says, explaining a precise planting plan where colours are skilfully juxtaposed to add intensity and contrast. The garden is divided into four parts, each comprising a series of interlocking triangles. Plants are allocated in descending height order, from back to front.

Stephen's sowing and growing regime is designed to deliver a mass of 4,000 flowering plants. Sunflowers are key, "sown last but planted first". It takes six hours to plant the sunflowers, and a further three days to plant the remaining seedlings. The pottery inevitably stalls at this time, all hands to the trowel. "The plants are small so you don't have to dig big holes, and planting its quick and efficient – loosen the soil, ease in the plants, cover, firm and water." Stephen has planning and planting down to a fine art, leaving the rest to nature. □

USEFUL INFORMATION

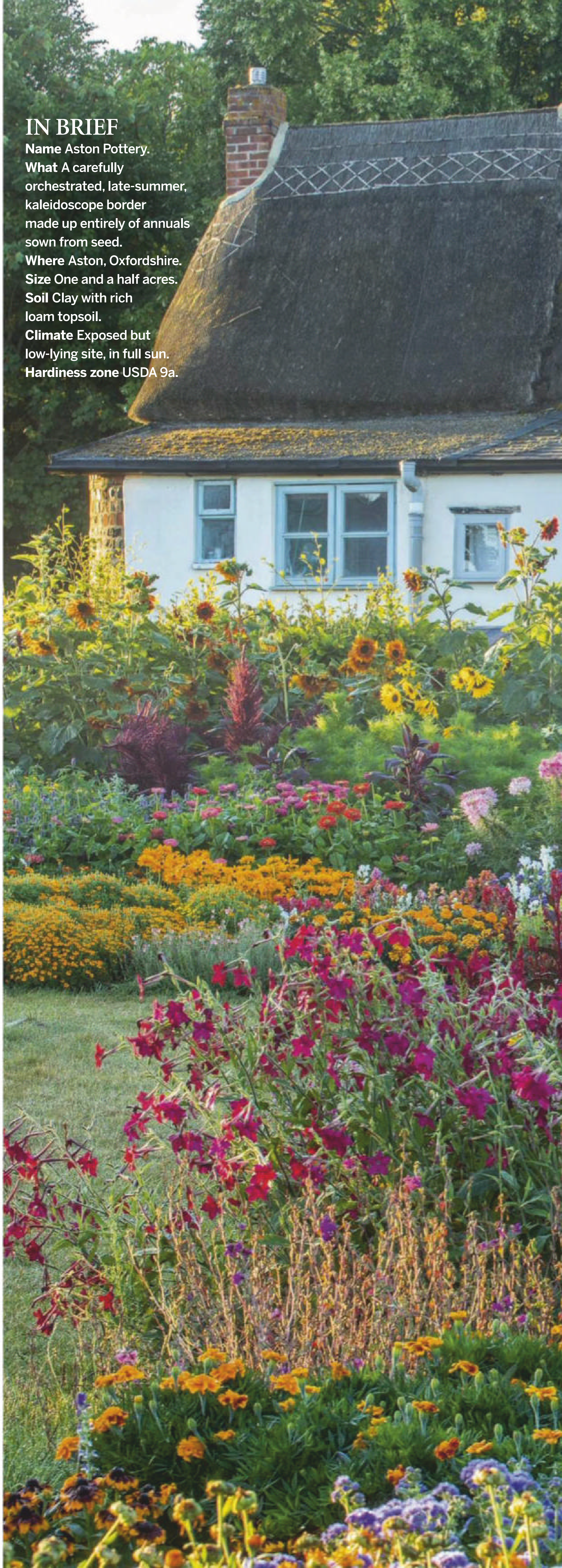
Address Aston Pottery, The Stables, Kingsway Farm, Aston, Oxfordshire OX18 2BT.
Tel 01993 852031. **Website** astonpottery.co.uk
Open Gardens, café and gift shop open Monday to Saturday and Bank Holidays, 9am-5pm, Sunday 10.30am-5pm. Garden tours, priced £5, available on request, June to October, Monday to Friday.

RECOMMENDED SEED SUPPLIERS

Chiltern Seeds chilternseeds.co.uk
Mr Fothergill's mr-fothergills.co.uk
Great Dixter greatdixtershop.co.uk
Nicky's Nursery nickys-nursery.co.uk
Special Plants specialplants.net
Thompson & Morgan thompson-morgan.com
Unwins unwins.co.uk

Turn the page for 32 key plants, and to page 63 for tips on growing from seed

Right A vibrant mix of flowering annuals, all sown from seed, create a seven-metre-deep hot bed of colour, which is intensified as it corners the border's end. This tumultuous tapestry is created by the series of interconnecting triangles, each planted mindful of colour juxtapositions, texture and height.



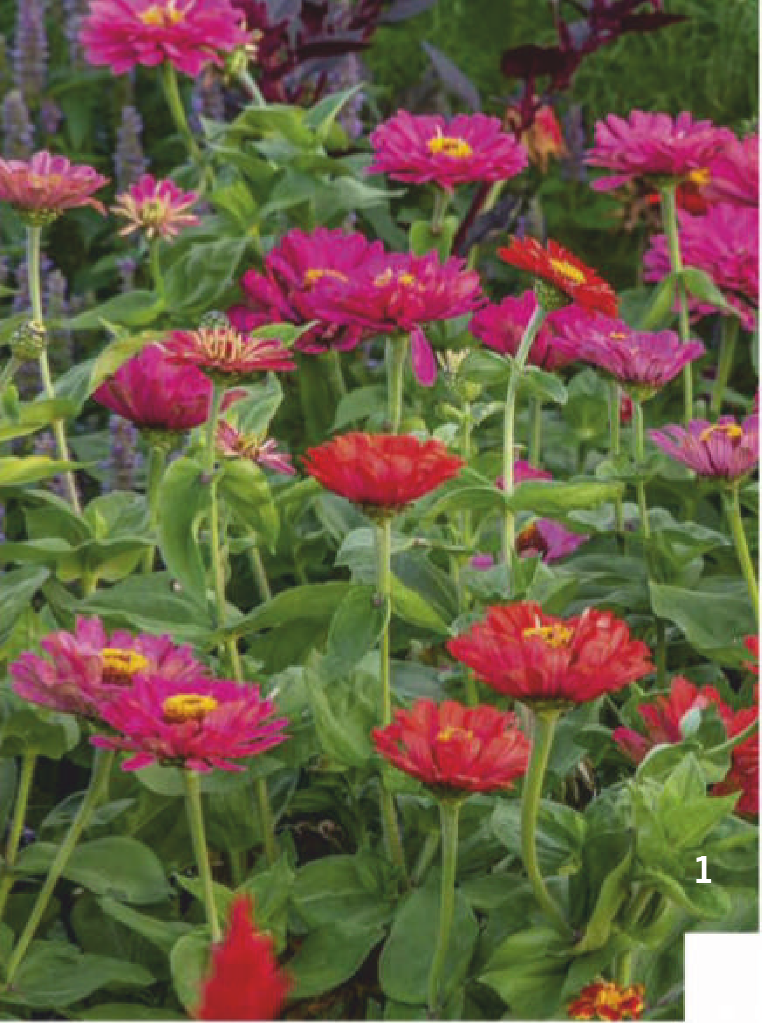
IN BRIEF

Name Aston Pottery.
What A carefully orchestrated, late-summer, kaleidoscope border made up entirely of annuals sown from seed.
Where Aston, Oxfordshire.
Size One and a half acres.
Soil Clay with rich loam topsoil.
Climate Exposed but low-lying site, in full sun.
Hardiness zone USDA 9a.

FROM 120 PACKETS OF SEED

Sown and grown each year from annuals this Cotswolds garden has colour and form

WORDS **JACKY HOBBS** PHOTOGRAPHS **CLIVE NICHOLS**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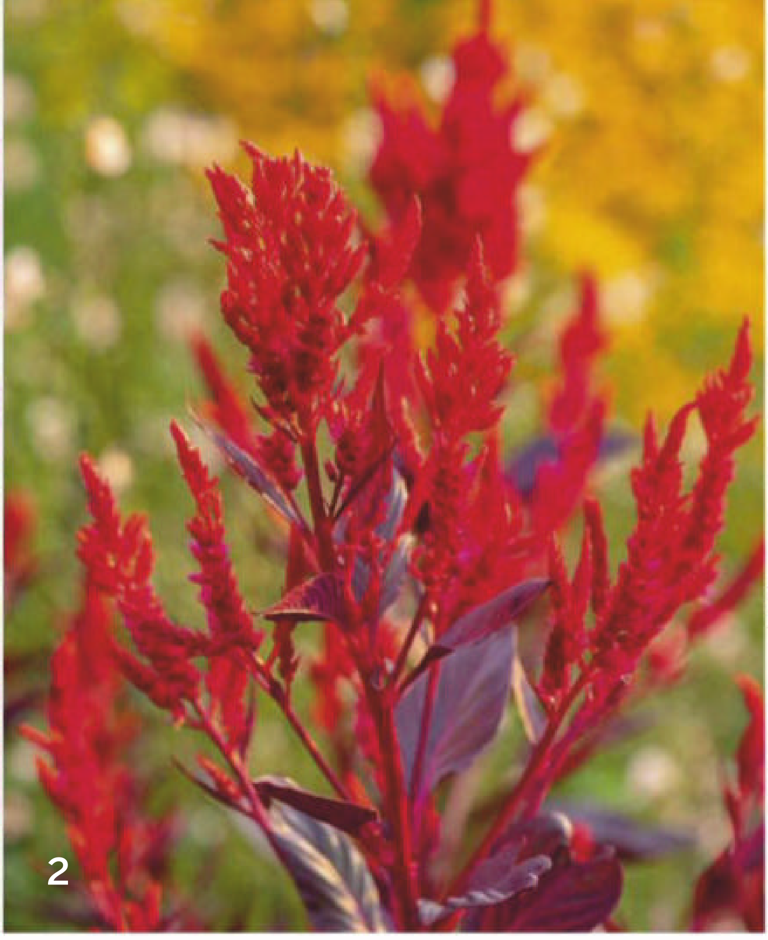
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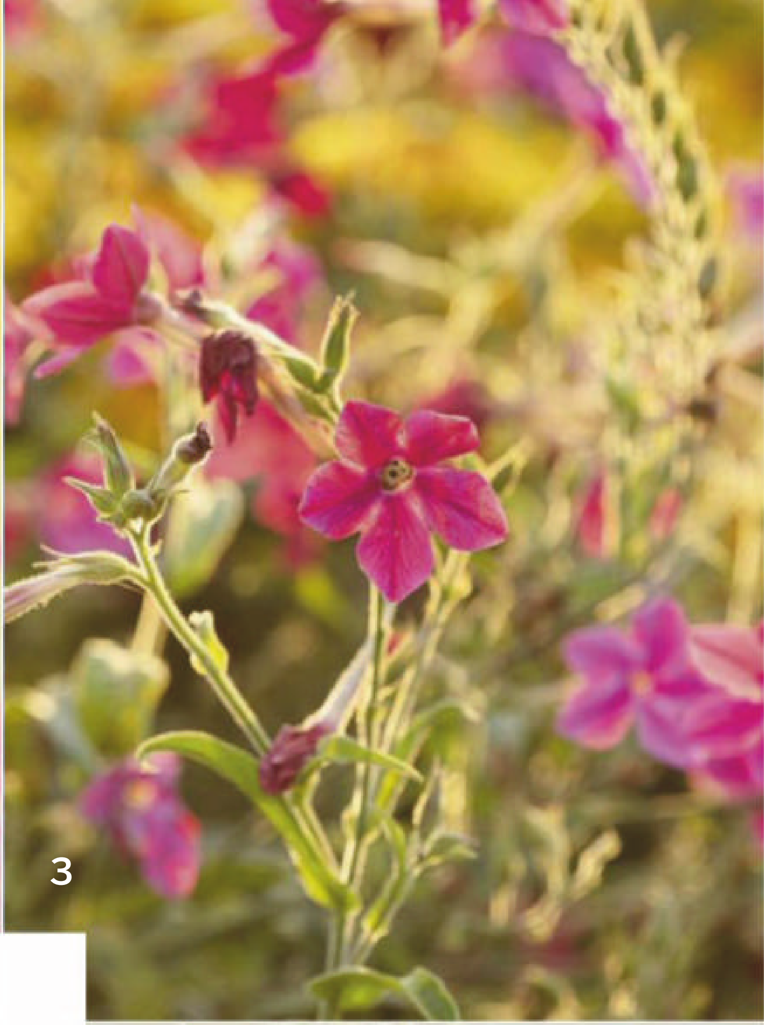
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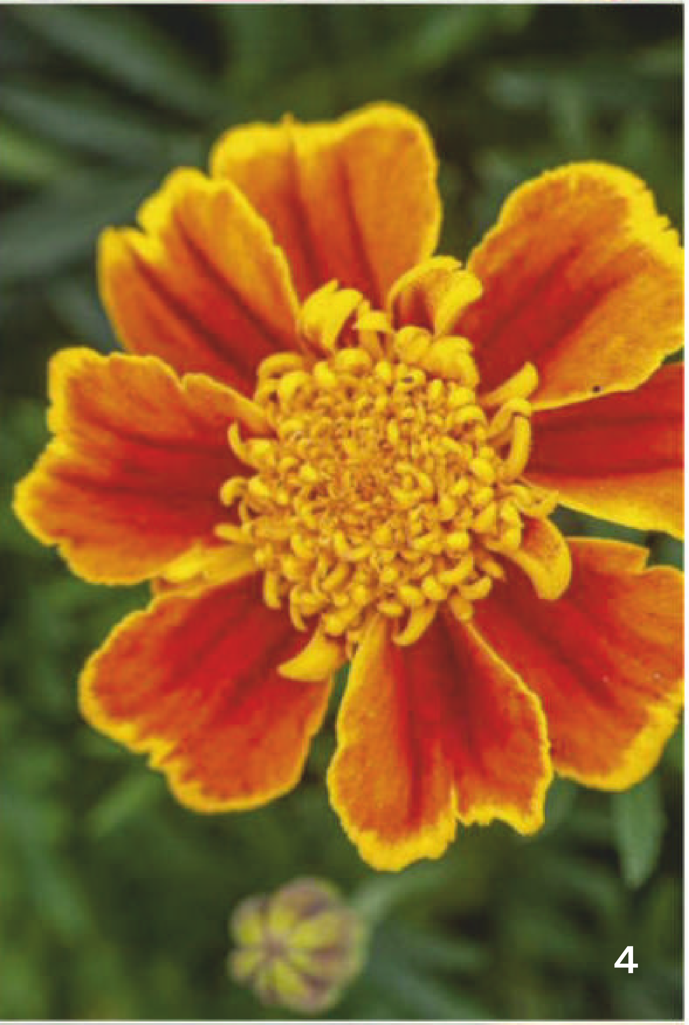
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32 KEY PLANTS

1 *Zinnia elegans* 'State Fair'
An annual that produces large, double flowers in a multitude of colours, including red, orange, purple, yellow and pink. Flowers from June until the first frosts. Great for attracting butterflies. 75-90cm. USDA 2a-11[†].

2 *Celosia argentea* var. *cristata* 'Scarlet Plume'
Produces dramatic, long-lasting scarlet feathers above bi-coloured dark-red and green foliage. Suitable for full sun or part shade. 45cm.

3 *Nicotiana alata* 'Sensation'
A half-hardy, fragrant mix of mauve and pink cut-and-come-again flowers from June to late summer. Attractive to bees. 75cm. USDA 10a-11.

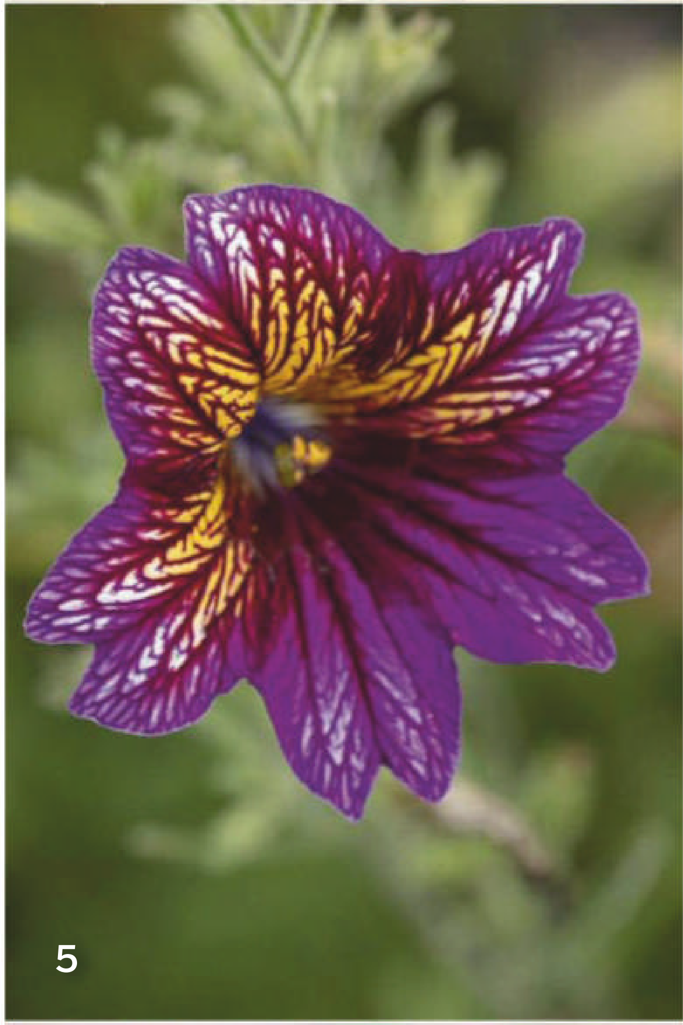
4 *Tagetes patula* x *erecta* 'Chameleon'
An unusual and intriguing cultivar that bears single, double and crested flowers of different colours all on the same plant. No two plants are ever the same. 45cm.

5 *Salpiglossis sinuata* 'Little Friends'
A compact and bushy plant that bears sprays of velvety flowers from June through to September in rich tones of reds, purples and mahogany. 60cm.

6 *Callistephus chinensis* 'Giant Princess Aster'
A really long-flowering aster, that bears pretty flowers, in a wide selection of antique colours, from June until October. Prefers full sun and a well-drained soil. 75cm.

7 *Amaranthus tricolor* 'Splendens Perfecta'
A superb tri-coloured foliage plant with eye-catching whorls of traffic-light red, yellow and green foliage. Requires shelter and full sun. 60cm.

8 *Salvia viridis* var. *comata* 'Pink Sundae'
An easy-to-grow, pink-hued clary sage that is decorated with saturated rose-pink and carmine-veined bracts from May to August. Needs to be planted in full sun. 50cm.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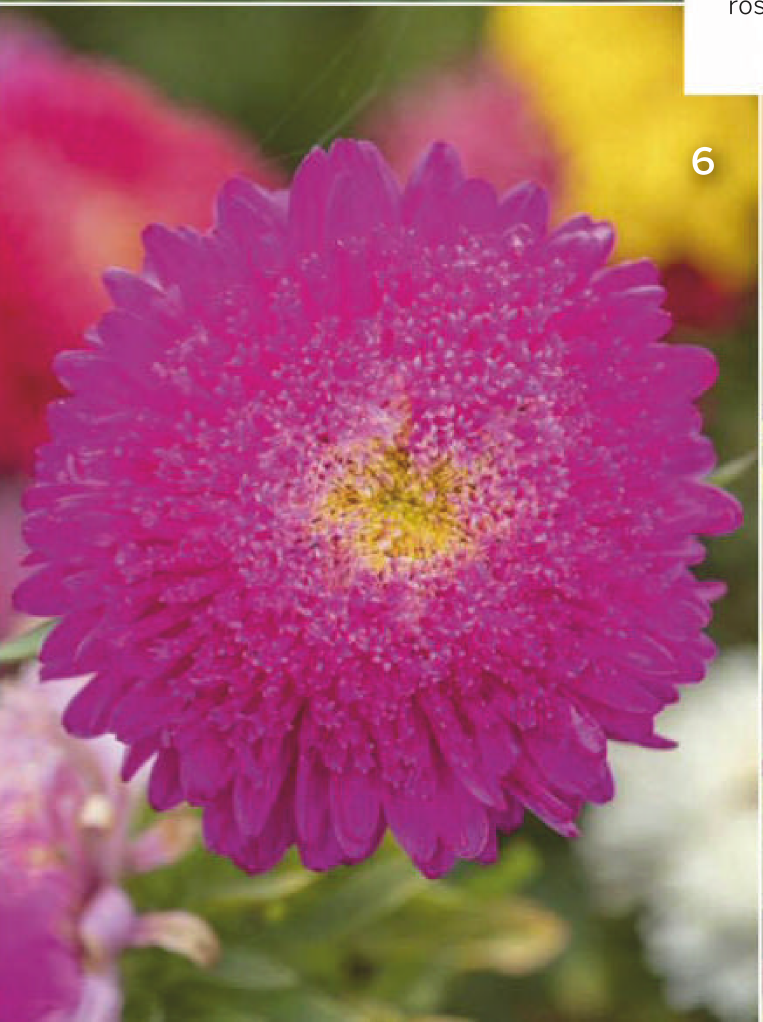
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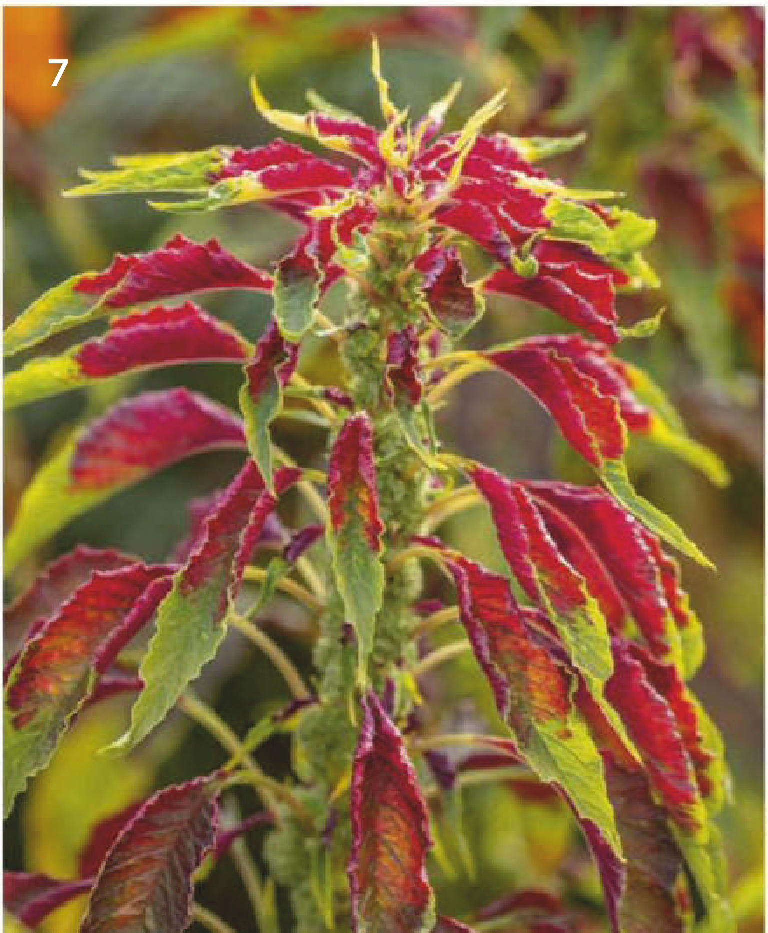
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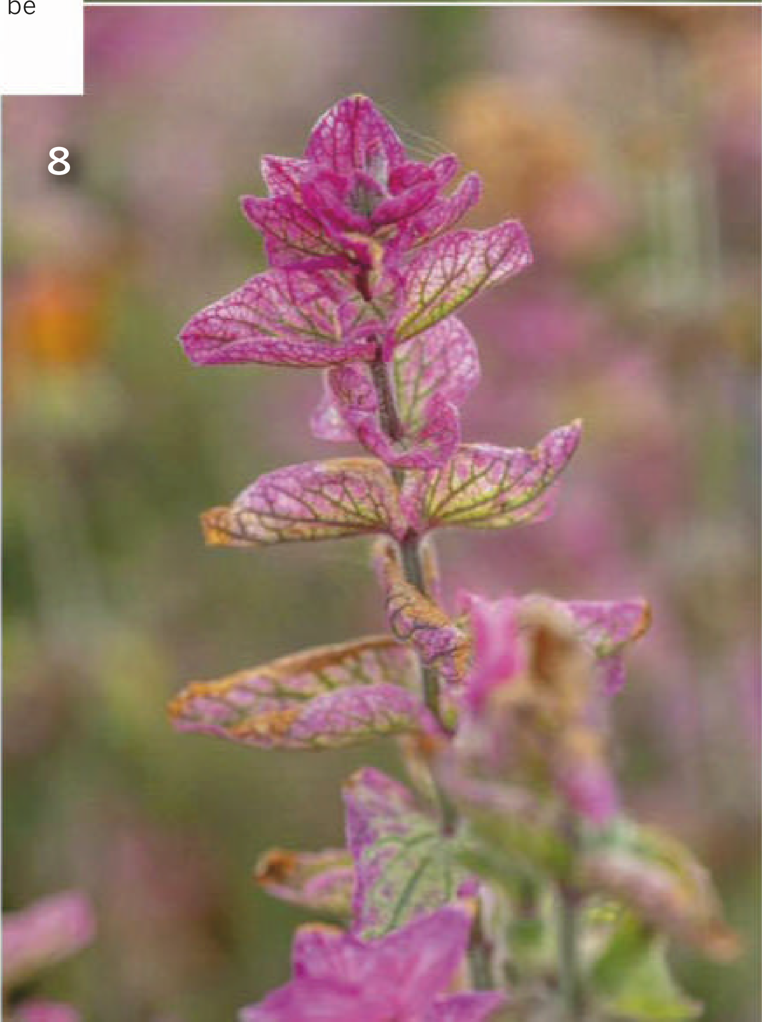
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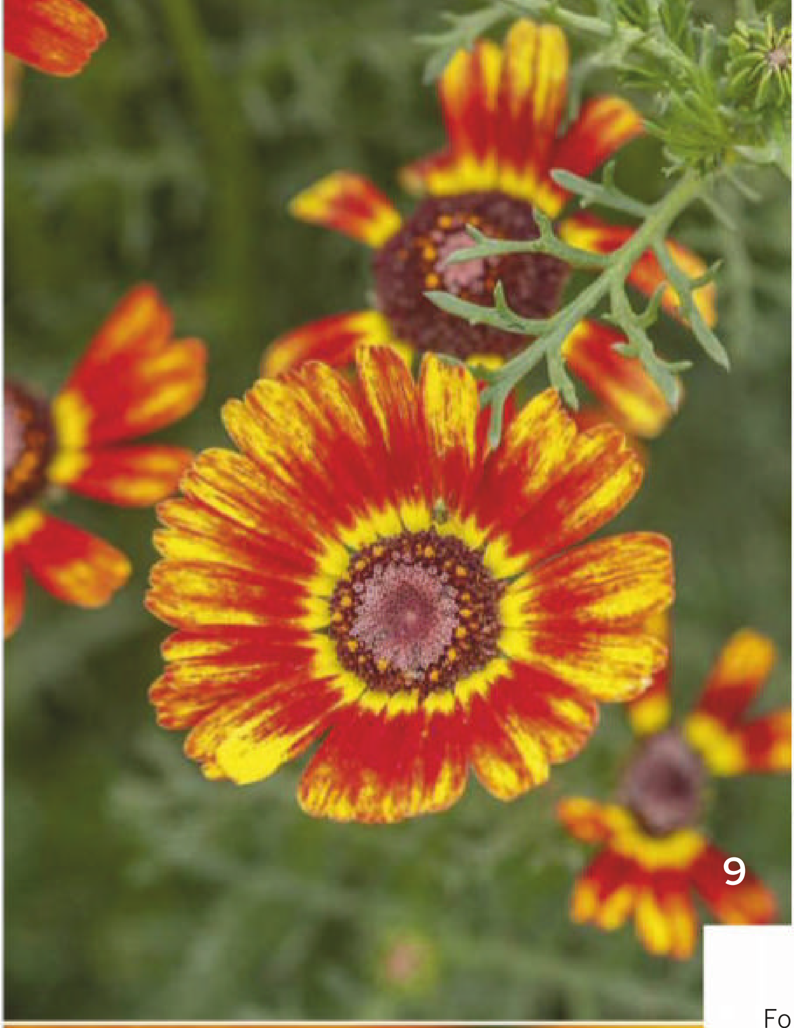
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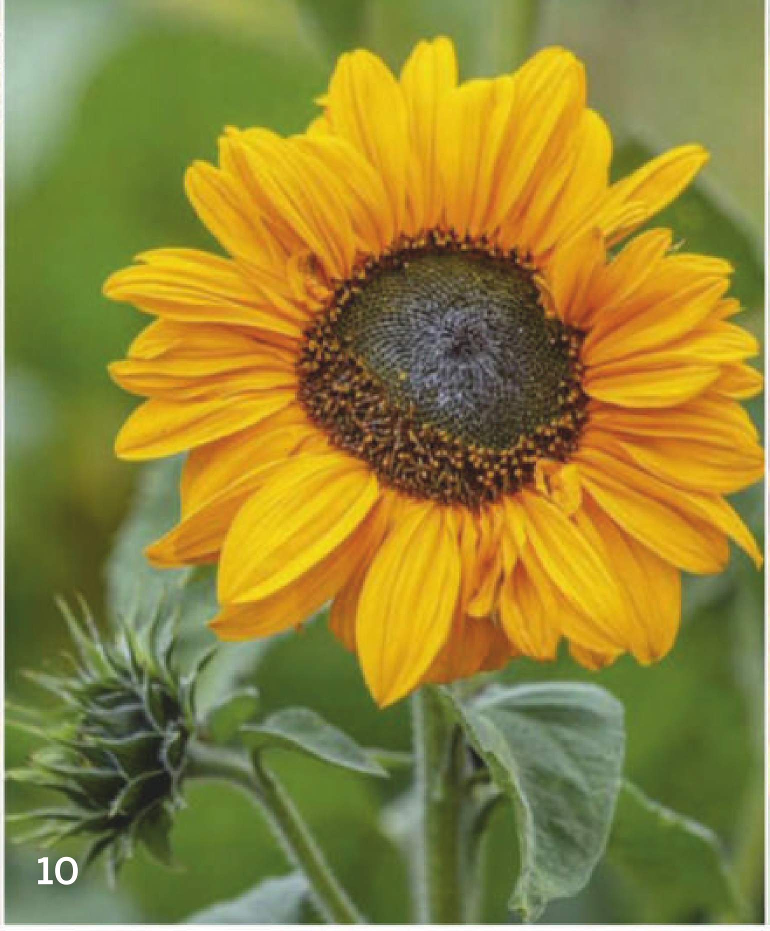
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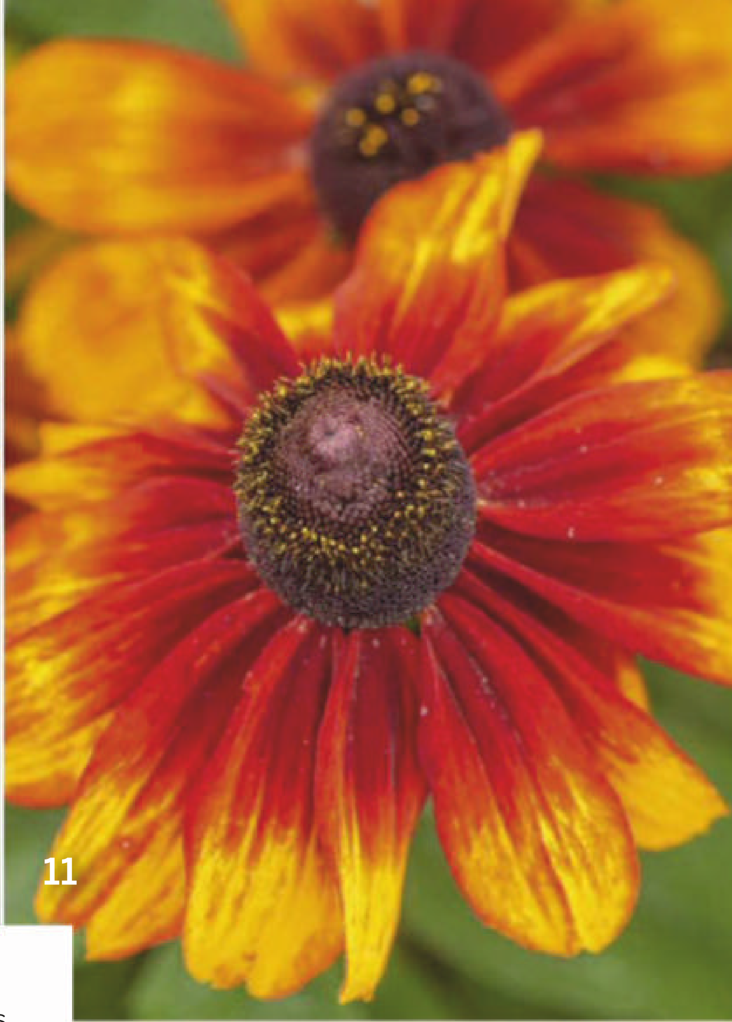
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9 *Ismelia carinata* 'Flame Shades'
Formerly known as *Chrysanthemum carinatum* 'Flame Shades', this brilliant tiger's-eye summer blooms in smouldering warm tones of gold, copper and maroon. Sun-loving and very easy to grow. 60cm.

10 *Helianthus annuus* 'Sonja'
A shorter, more compact sunflower that has been bred for the cutting garden. Looks great when planted in groups. Its branching stems yield large, yolk-yellow flowers with a brown eye. 1.1m.

11 *Rudbeckia hirta* 'Toto'
This dwarf, golden black-eyed Susan is a compact, well-branched plant ideal for the front of summer borders. 40cm. RHS H3, USDA 3a-7b.

12 *Tagetes erecta* 'Crackerjack'
An early flowering pom-pom marigold. Long stemmed and vigorous, it produces large, tonal gold flowers from May to September. 90cm.

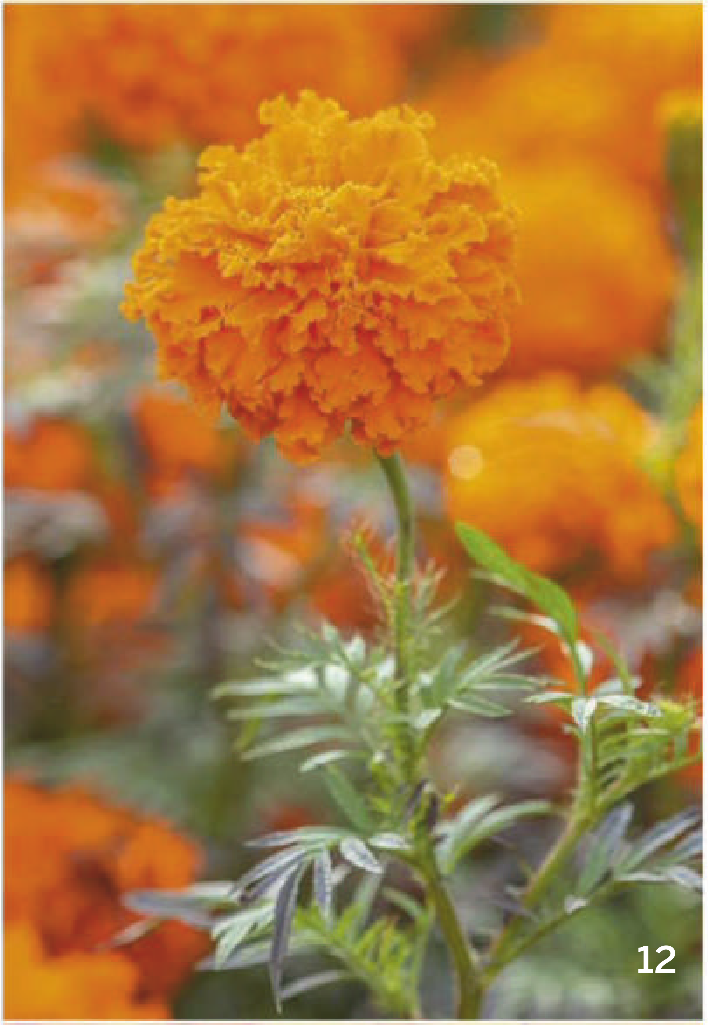
13 *Nicotiana* 'Lime Green'
Popular for its profusion of scented, star-like, lime-green flowers that attract pollinators. 75cm. AGM*. RHS H2, USDA 10a-11.

14 *Tagetes tenuifolia* 'Tangerine Gem'
A hardy, dwarf cultivar that is ideal for edging and for filling gaps at the front of a border. Throughout summer, from May until August it is smothered in small, pert tangerine flowers. 30cm.

15 *Cosmos bipinnatus* 'Xanthos'
An unusual cosmos that is notable for its soft, buttery, lemon-coloured flowers. Compact, well-branched and long- flowering, it produces hosts of blooms throughout the summer. 60cm.

16 *Amaranthus* 'Hopi Red Dye'
A towering, statuesque plant with brilliant maroon-coloured flowers and show-stopping dark foliage. A sun-loving stunning stalwart for the back of border. 1.8m.

Turn to page 64 for more key plants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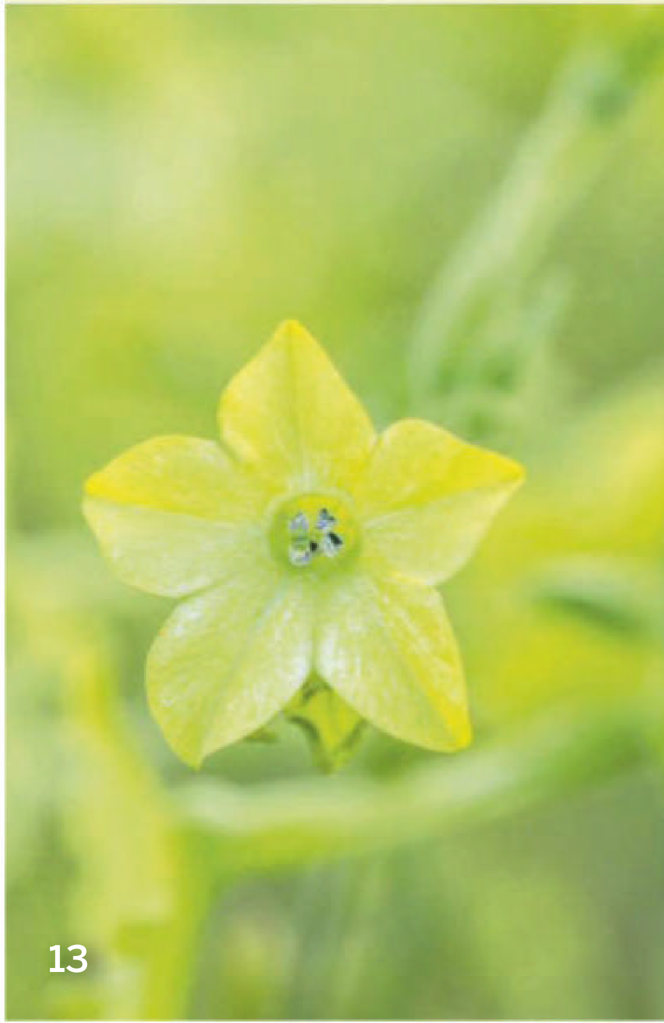
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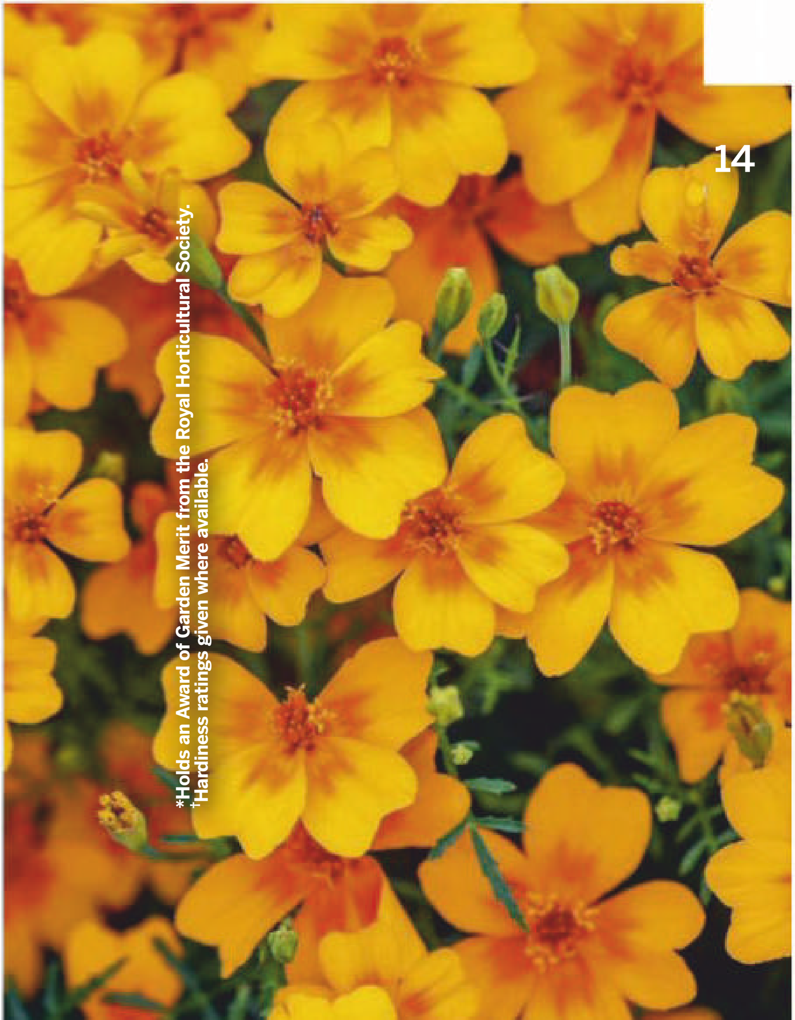
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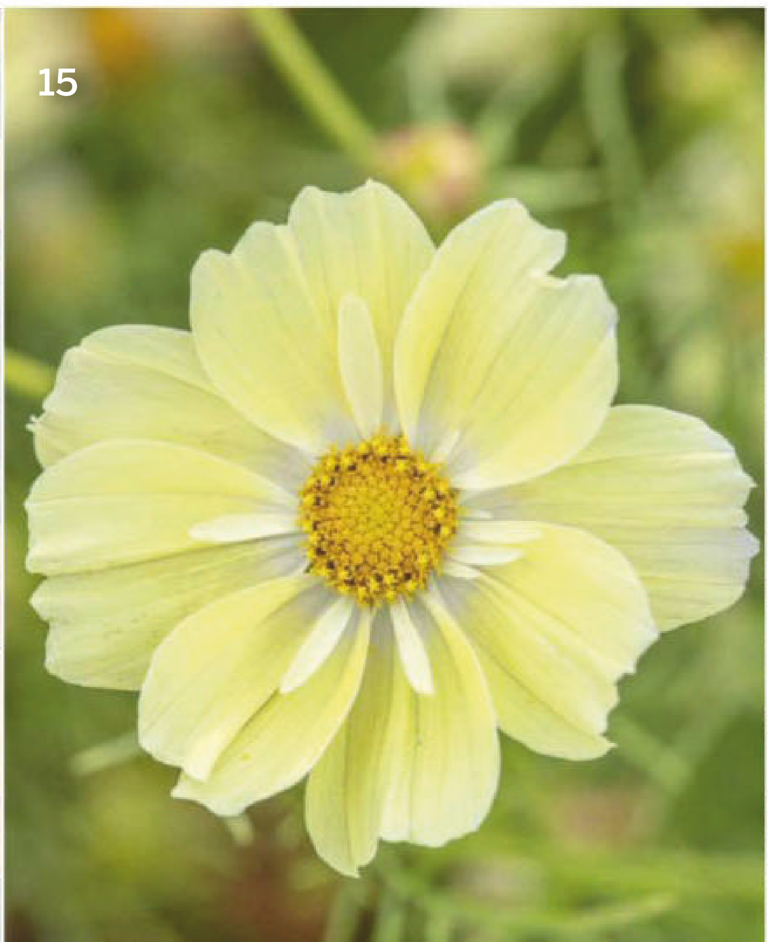
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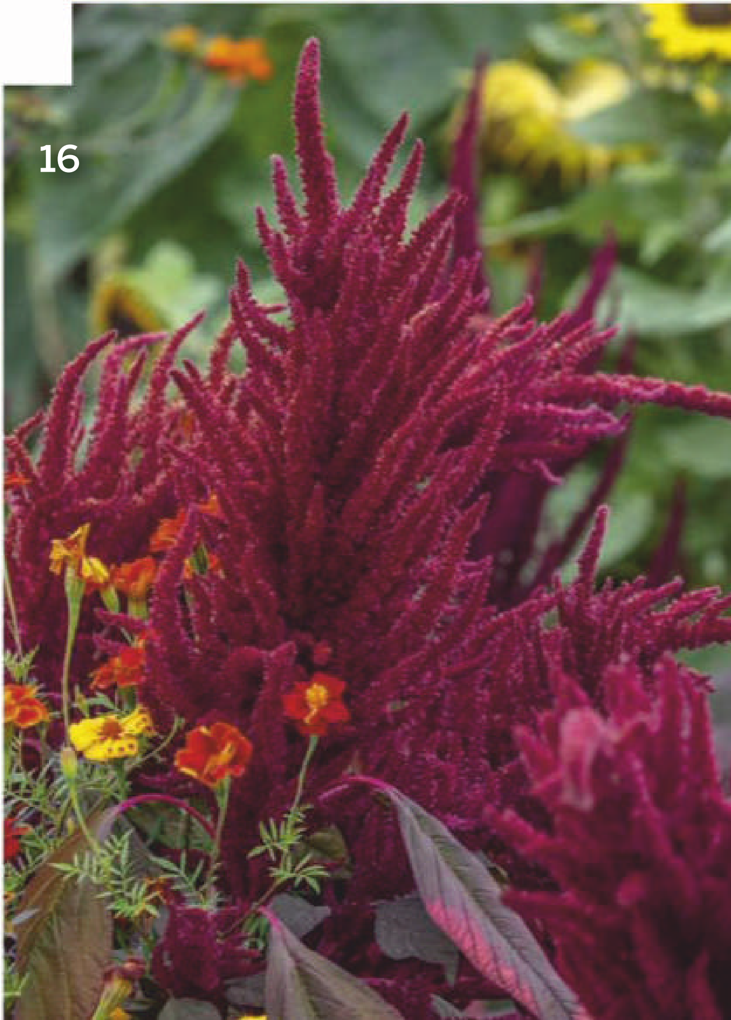
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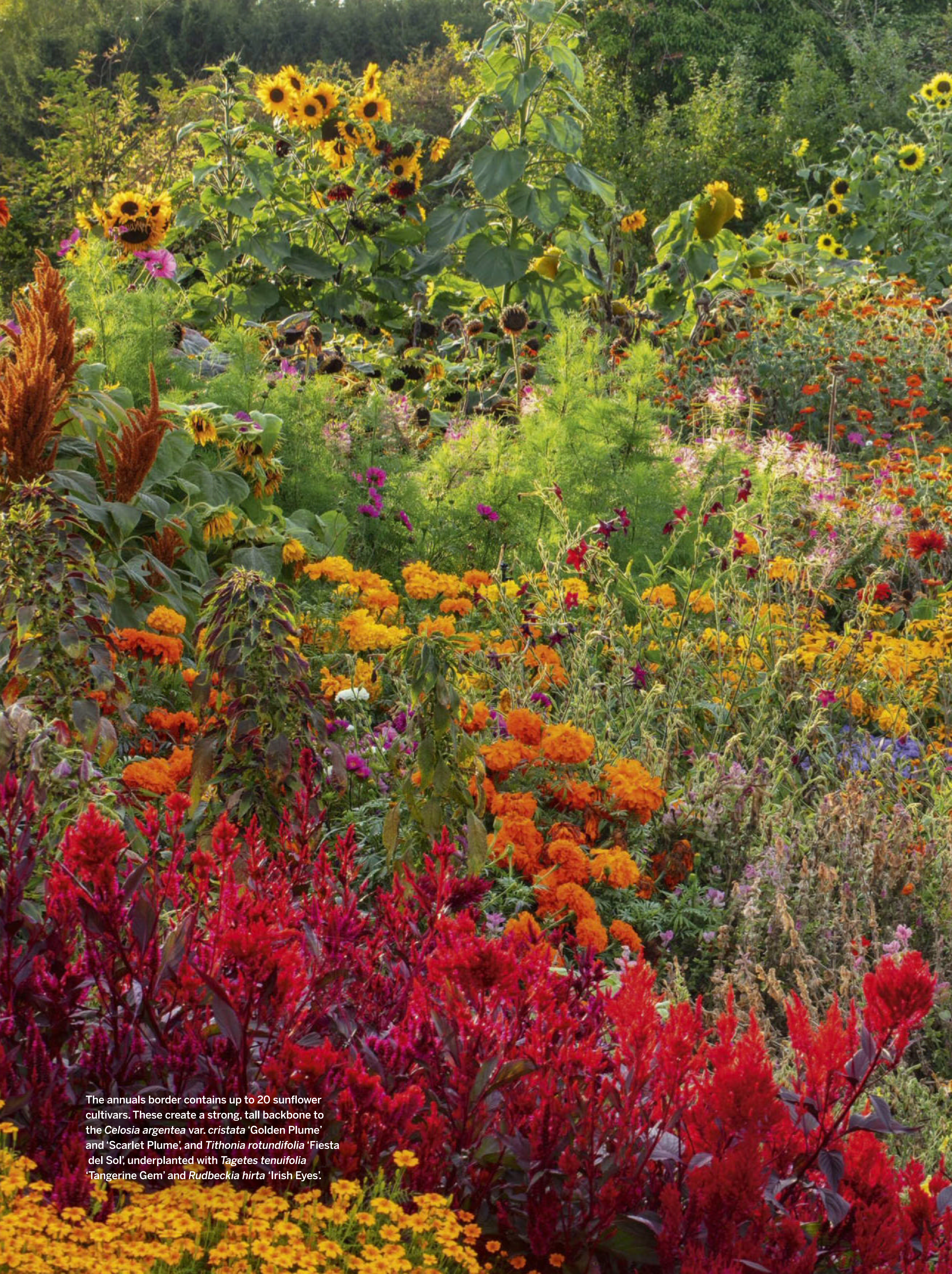
*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.
†Hardiness ratings given where available.



The annuals border contains up to 20 sunflower cultivars. These create a strong, tall backbone to the *Celosia argentea* var. *cristata* 'Golden Plume' and 'Scarlet Plume', and *Tithonia rotundifolia* 'Fiesta del Sol', underplanted with *Tagetes tenuifolia* 'Tangerine Gem' and *Rudbeckia hirta* 'Irish Eyes'.

I LOVE COLOUR. THERE'S NO SCHEME, JUST NO WHITE

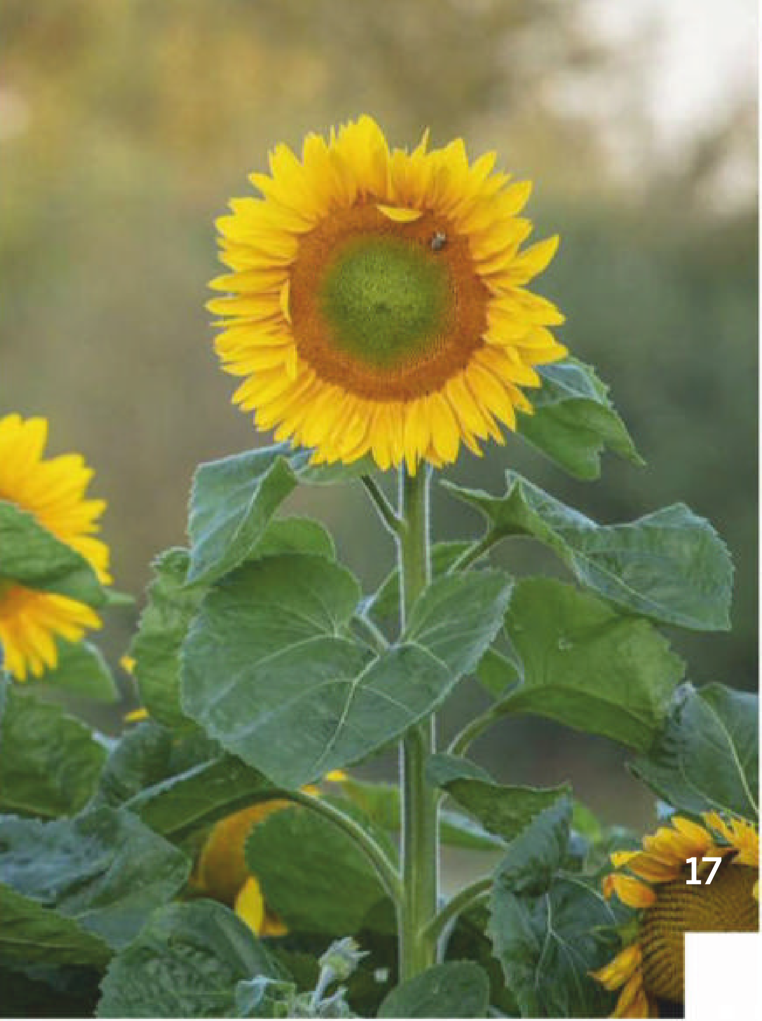
Growing a late-summer border from seed

PLANNING

- **Draw a plan of the border and sub-divide widthways** into a minimum of three tiers to accommodate tall, medium-sized and smaller plants.
- **Divide each subsection into triangles** that are alternately inverted so that they interconnect.
- **Select seed suitable for the soil,** site and colour theme, considering height, flowering time and duration.
- **Order your seeds from a reliable source** (see page 58 for suggestions; Stephen mainly uses Chiltern Seeds), allowing approximately one packet of 30 seeds per square metre, but follow the advice on the seed packet.

PLANTING

- **In mid-April sow all the smaller seeds,** such as nicotiana and rudbeckias, in trays of John Innes No.2 mixed with 25 per cent horticultural grit. Water and leave to germinate. Prick out and transplant into individual cells after 30 days and grow on under cover.
- **In mid-May sow larger seeds,** such as sunflowers, tithonias and salvias, into individual plugs. Place under cover in a greenhouse, or on a windowsill, for three weeks, allowing ten days to germinate and one to two weeks to grow on.
- **Prepare the soil** in your border, raking a fine tilth.
- **Plant out, according to your plan, in the second week of June.** Label plants if you want to remember which is which. Water in and then water each individual plant daily by hand for the first three weeks only. Keep any surplus plants to fill later gaps.
- **Deadhead to encourage repeat blooms,** allowing the final flush to go to seed and feed birds and late-season foraging insects.



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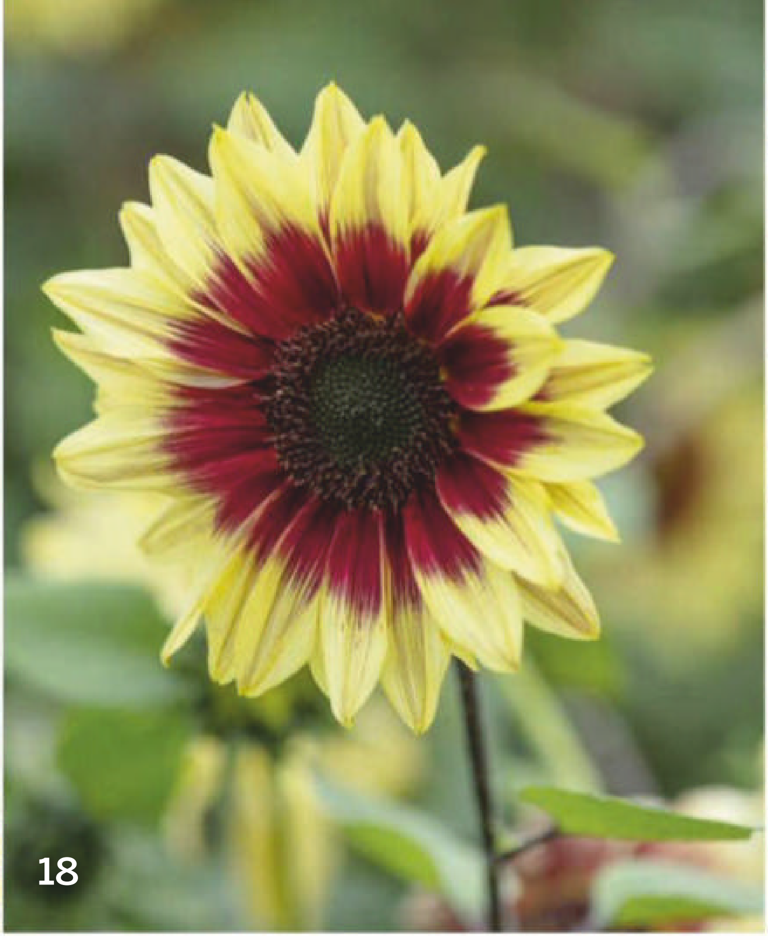

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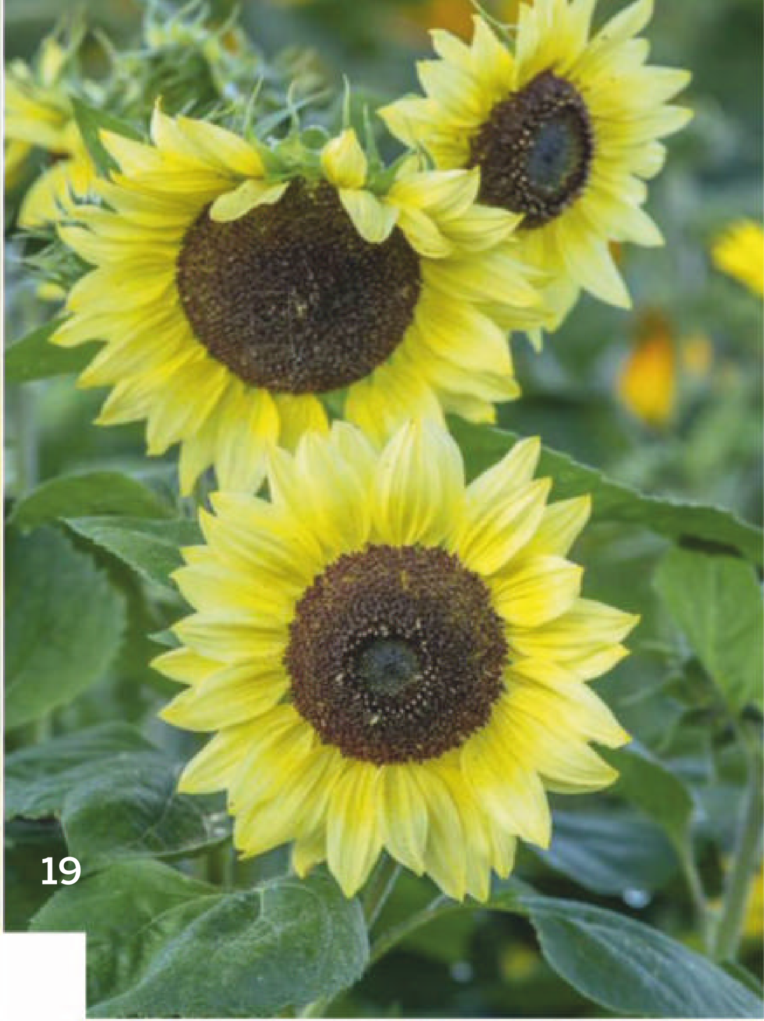

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32 KEY PLANTS CONTINUED

17 *Helianthus annuus* 'Summer Breeze'

Tall, erect, hardy single-stem sunflower with bright-lemon petals and a lime-green centre. Enjoys full sun but tolerates partial shade. 1.5m.

18 *Helianthus annuus* 'Magic Roundabout'

A new sunflower that offers an array of attractive, multi-coloured flowers in tones of pastel lemon to café-au-lait – each with a dark centre. 1.8m.

19 *Helianthus annuus* 'Ikarus'

A shorter, pale lemon-coloured sunflower of branching habit that assures a multitude of flowers. Each flower is around 10-15cm across and is buttoned with a chocolate centre. 1.2m.

20 *Helianthus annuus* 'Velvet Queen'

A velvety, dark cinnamon-coloured sunflower with a chocolate-coloured centre. It produces lots of flowerheads from multiple branching stems. Good for cut flowers. 1.5m.

21 *Rudbeckia hirta* 'Irish Eyes'

Half-hardy, annual or perennial that needs full sun or part sun to produce its large, daisy-like, golden-yellow blooms. Each flower has a pale-green eye at its centre. 60cm. RHS H3, USDA 3a-7b.

22 *Tithonia rotundifolia* 'Fiesta del Sol'

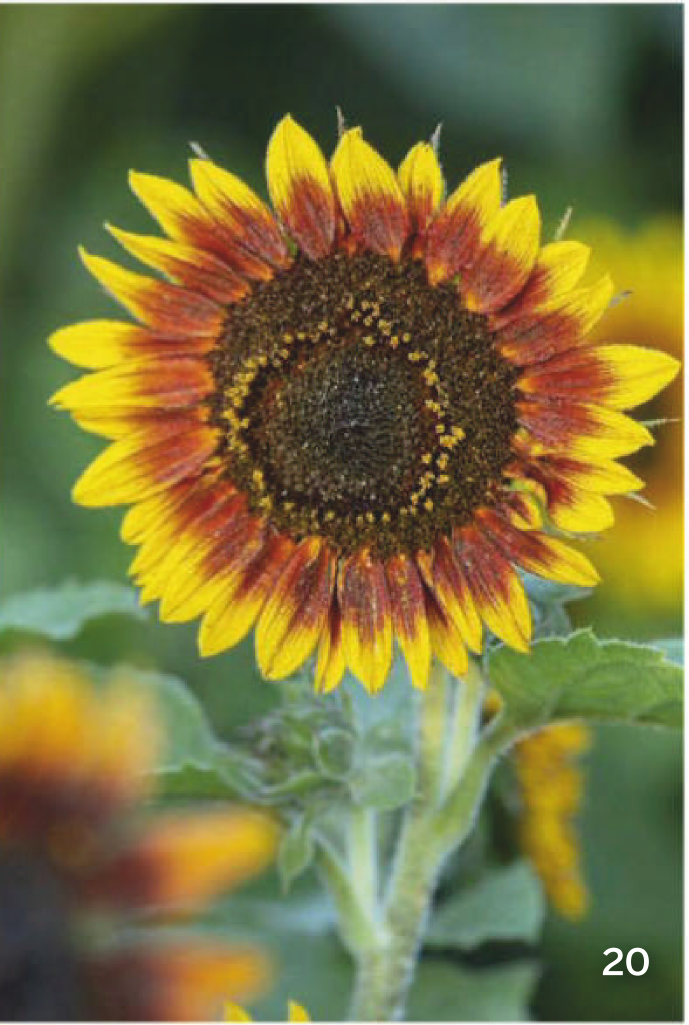
The most compact of Mexican sunflowers. It flowers early and for several months, producing intense, bright-orange flowers, which are attractive to butterflies, from June to October. 75cm.

23 *Cleome hassleriana* 'Violet Queen'

A justifiably popular half-hardy, plant with spidery blooms that begin a vivid violet and fade to pink. Needs full sun but in the right conditions will produce flowers from June to September. 1.5m. RHS H2.

24 *Helianthus annuus* 'Red Sun'

A distinctive and unusual sunflower with large maroon-red flowerheads that mature to ruddy brown. Very good for cutting. 1.5m.



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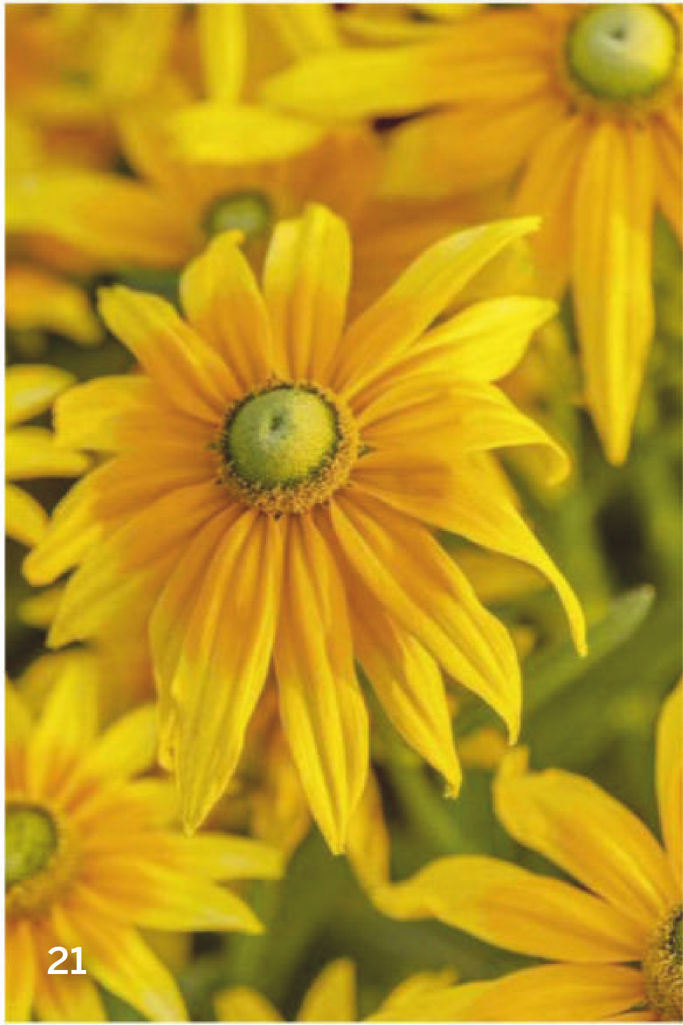

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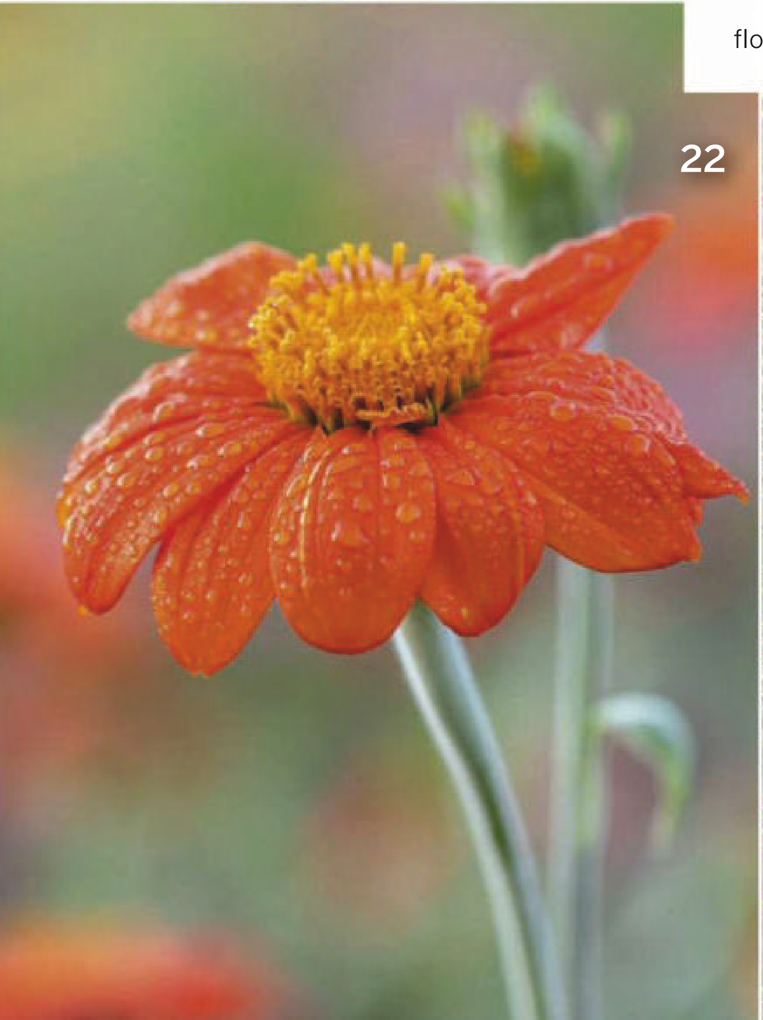

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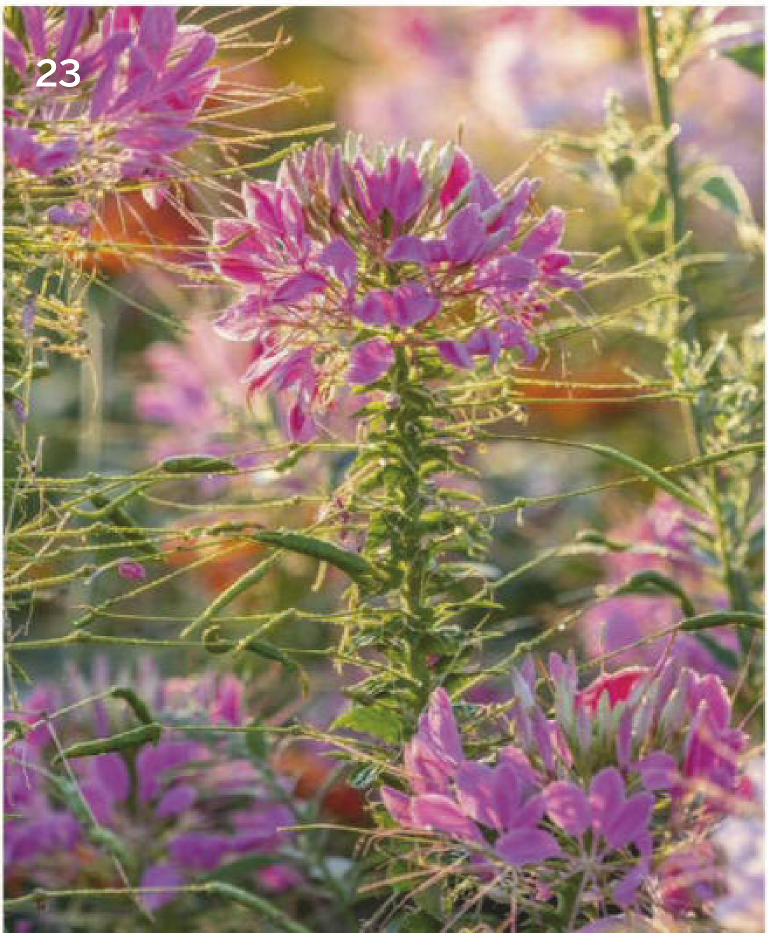

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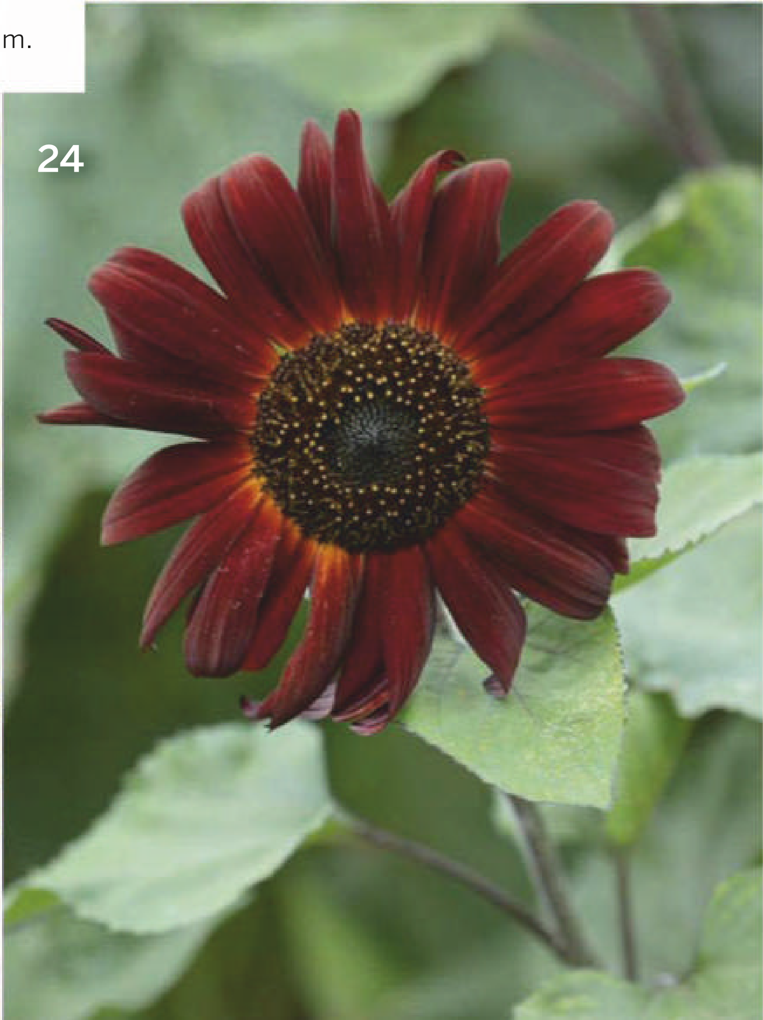

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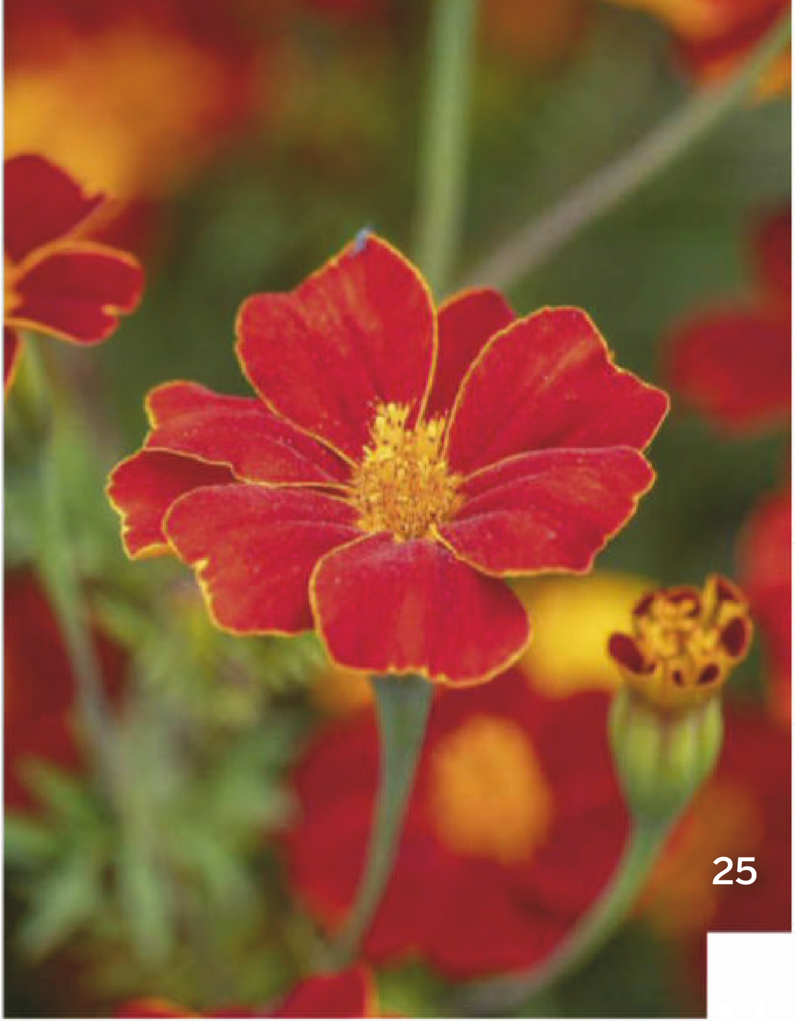
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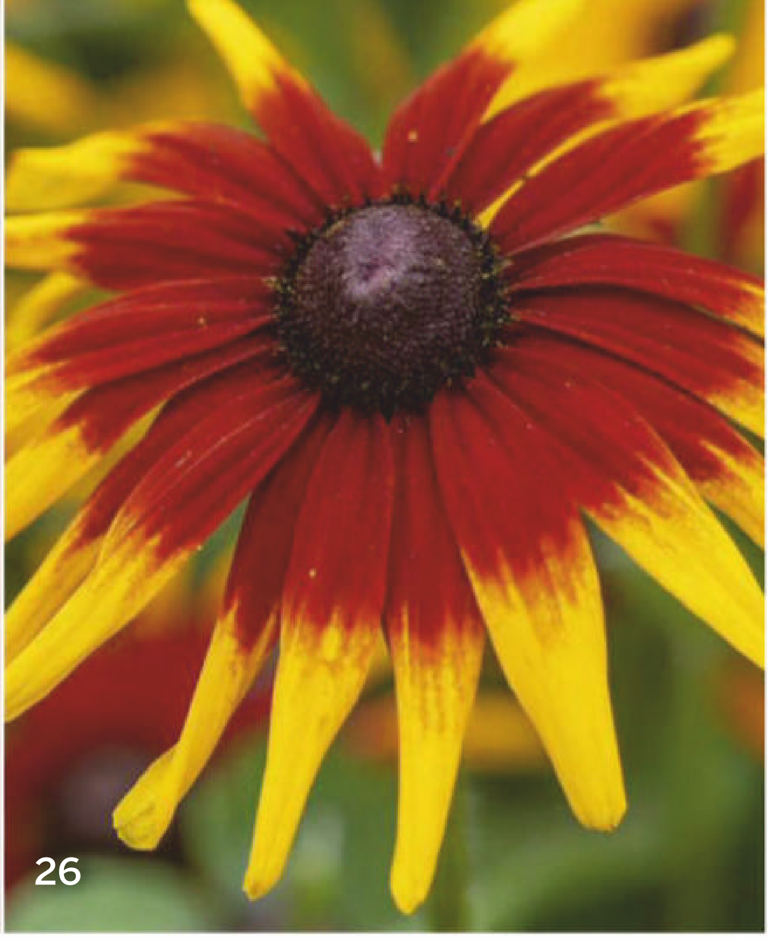
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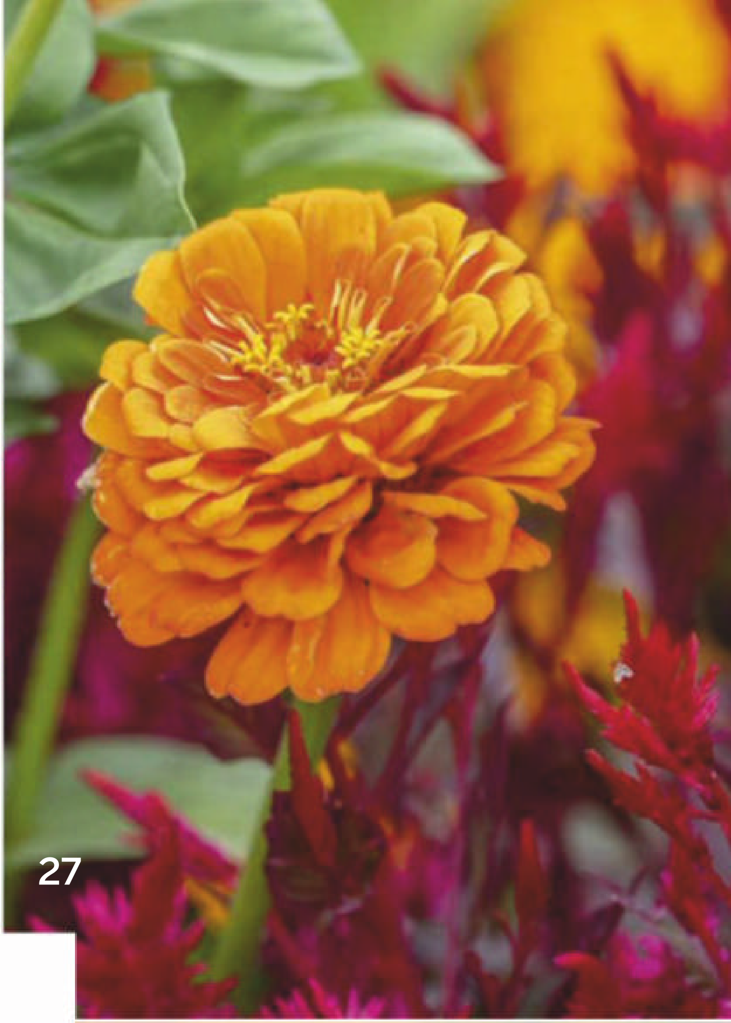
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25 ***Tagetes patula*** **'Burning Embers'**
A free-flowering French marigold that is often grown alongside tomatoes to ward off pests. Its rich, velvety, dark-orange, petals are rimmed with gold. 45cm.

26 ***Rudbeckia hirta*** **'Autumn Forest'**
An unusual black-eyed Susan that produces large, daisy-like flowers in autumnal red, gold and chocolate. Can be grown as a perennial or as an annual. 60cm. RHS H3, USDA 3a-7b.

27 ***Zinnia elegans*** **'Super Yoga Orange'**
A long-stemmed, large-flowered cultivar that is ideal for a sunny, sheltered spot. To avoid root disturbance it is best to sow in situ from the end of April to early May. 90cm.

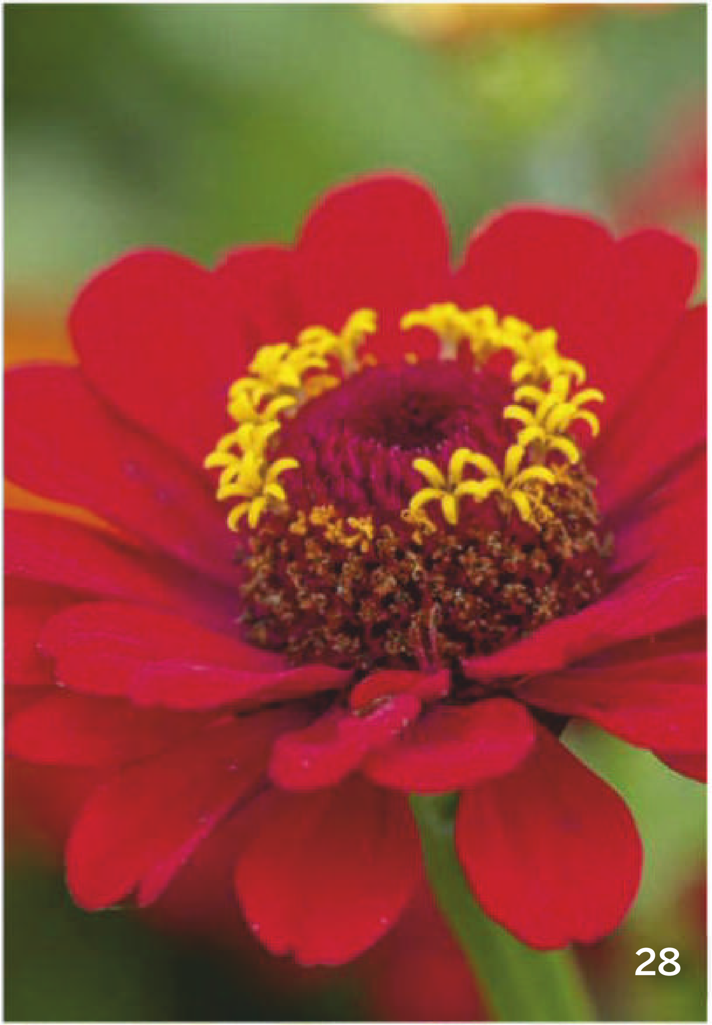
28 ***Zinnia elegans*** **'Super Yoga Scarlet'**
A velvety, multi-layered scarlet zinnia for a sunny, sheltered spot. As with 'Super Yoga Orange' (above), it is best sown in situ from the end of April to early May. 90cm.

29 ***Celosia argentea*** **var.** ***cristata*** **'Golden Plume'**
Has almost unnaturally bright, yellow-orange plumage and equally vivacious green foliage. Half-hardy, yet quick and easy to grow with long-lasting flowers. 45cm.

30 ***Amaranthus cruentus*** **'Hot Biscuits'**
An alternative to traditional reds, this cinnamon-coloured amaranthus produces masses of architectural, upward-facing, feathered spires and makes an excellent cut flower. 1.5m.

31 ***Amaranthus cruentus*** **'Oeschberg'**
A striking fox-tail amaranthus with edible, dark-purple foliage and eye-catching, chenille-like red flower spikes. 90cm. AGM. RHS H2.

32 ***Cosmos sulphureus*** **'Cosmic Red'**
A new cultivar with abundant eye-catching, scarlet-red flowers the colour of which intensifies with increasing light levels. A dazzling compact plant.30cm.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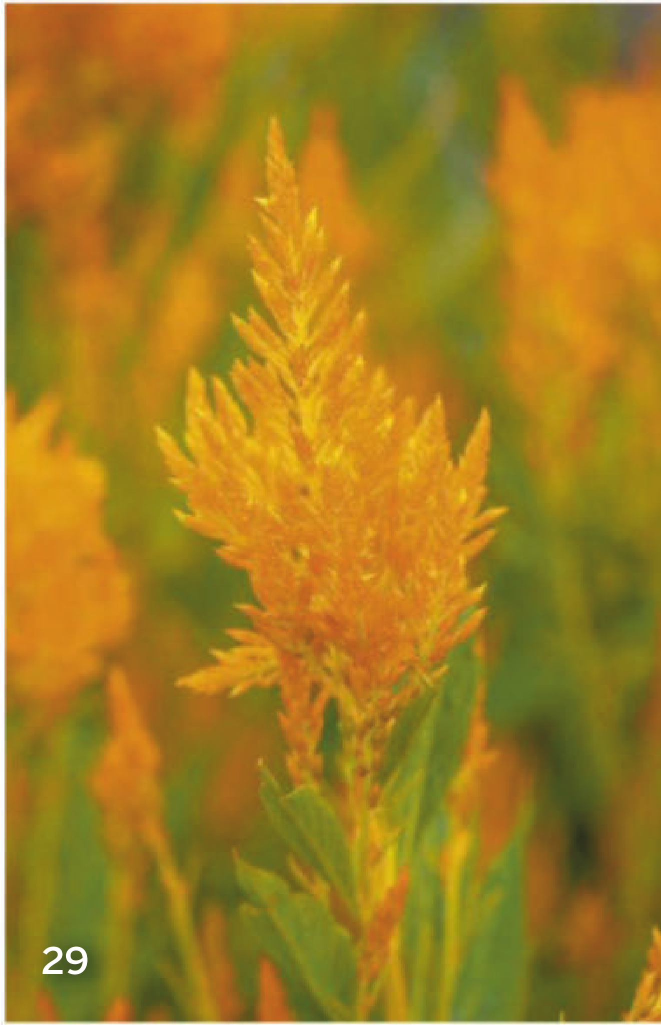
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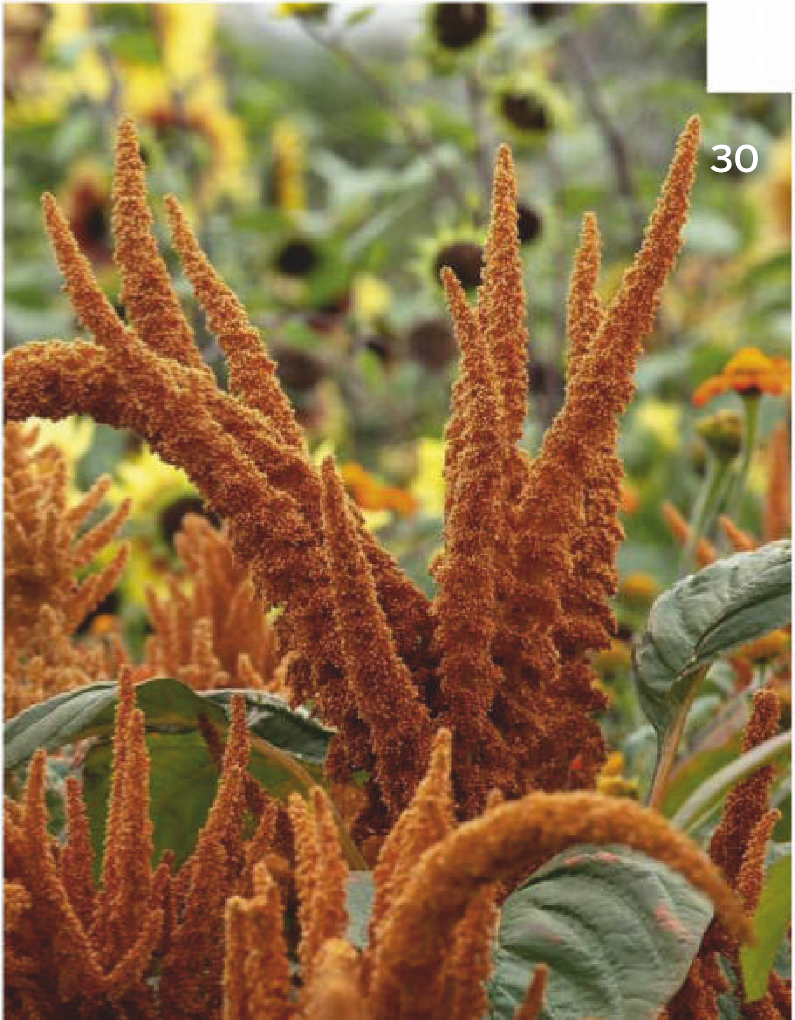
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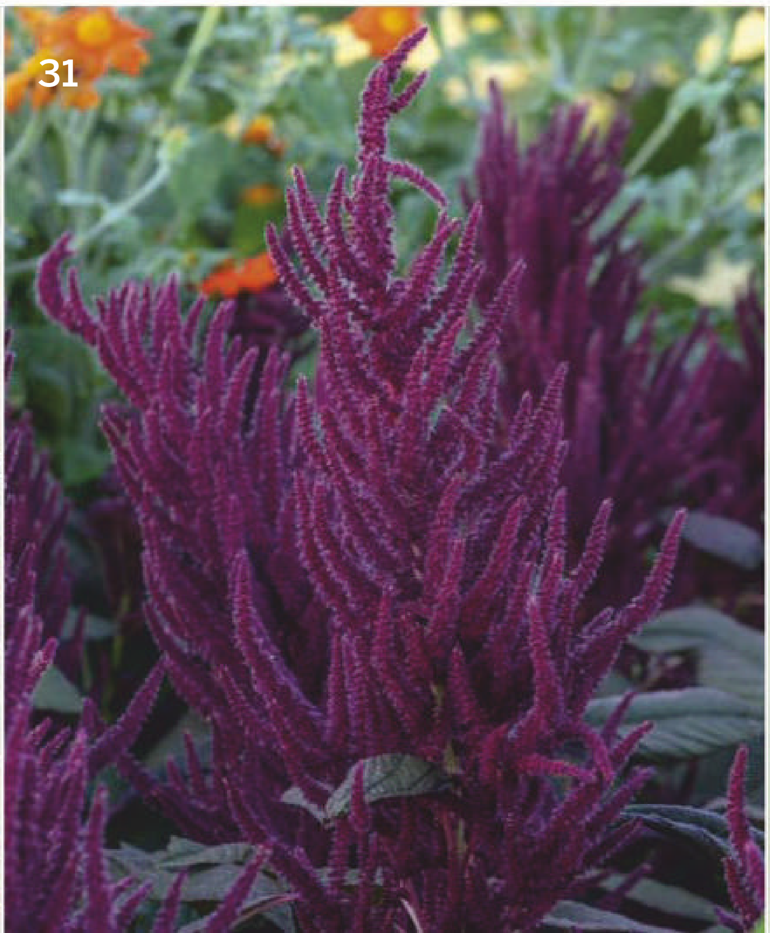
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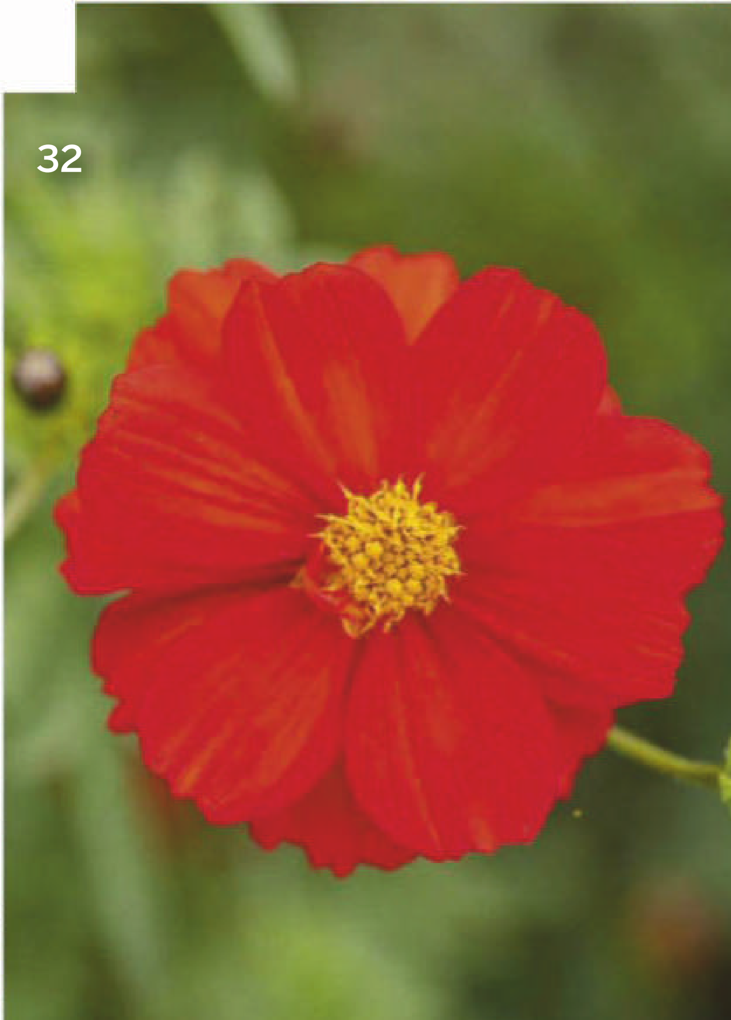
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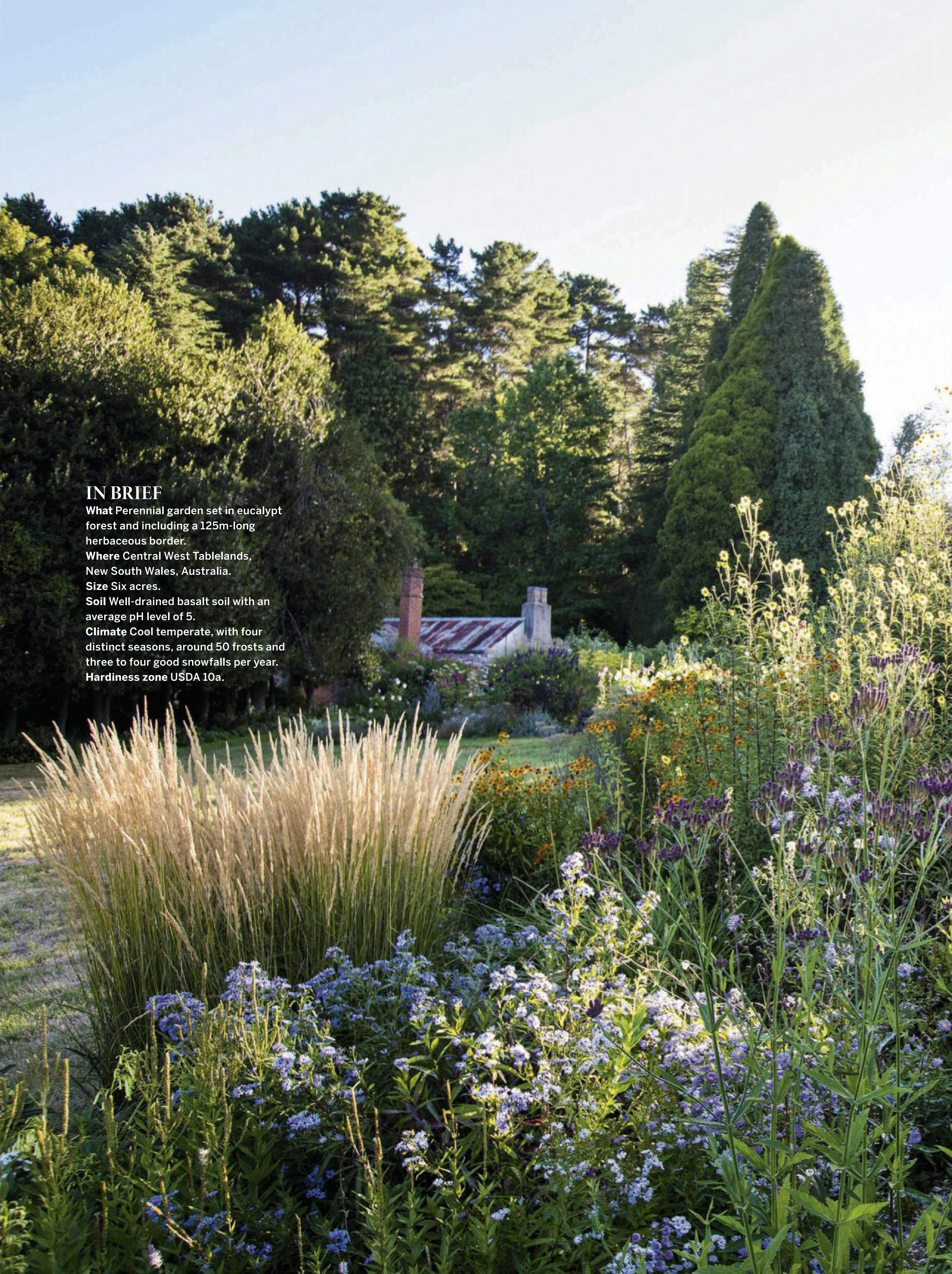


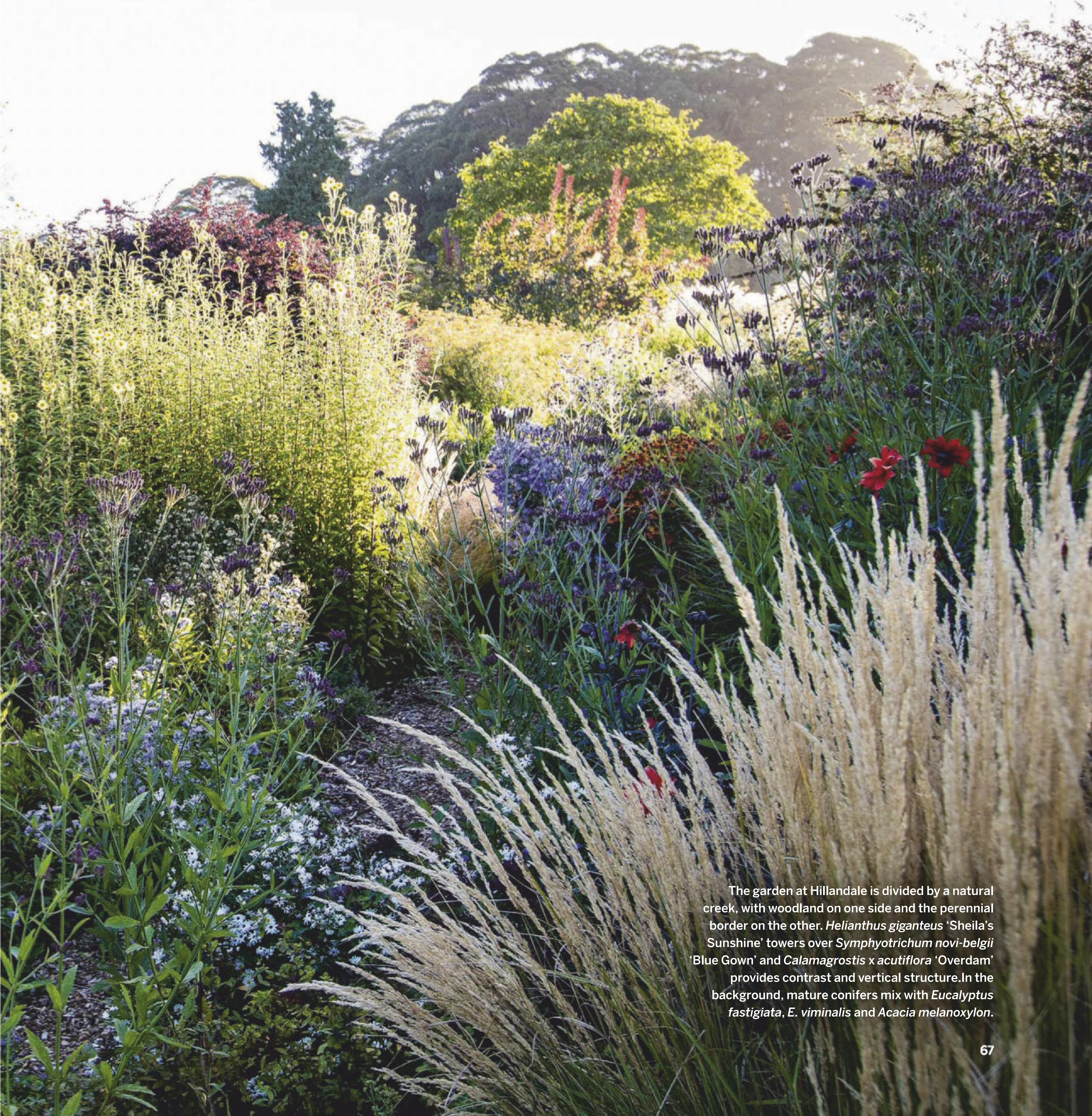
IN BRIEF

What Perennial garden set in eucalypt forest and including a 125m-long herbaceous border.
Where Central West Tablelands, New South Wales, Australia.
Size Six acres.
Soil Well-drained basalt soil with an average pH level of 5.
Climate Cool temperate, with four distinct seasons, around 50 frosts and three to four good snowfalls per year.
Hardiness zone USDA 10a.

MOUNTAIN HIGH

A blend of historical English garden and natural Australian bush inspires a plantswoman's wish for wild beauty

WORDS HILARY BURDEN PHOTOGRAPHS CLAIRE TAKACS



The garden at Hillandale is divided by a natural creek, with woodland on one side and the perennial border on the other. *Helianthus giganteus* 'Sheila's Sunshine' towers over *Symphyotrichum novi-belgii* 'Blue Gown' and *Calamagrostis x acutiflora* 'Overdam' provides contrast and vertical structure.In the background, mature conifers mix with *Eucalyptus fastigiata*, *E. viminalis* and *Acacia melanoxylon*.

A spring-fed creek traverses Hillandale, a secluded, sloping woodland and perennial garden over the Blue Mountains west of Sydney. The blend of historic English garden and natural Australian bush inspires a plantswoman's lust for natural beauty and taming the wild. Had you viewed its perennial border three months ago, with nothing much growing above ankle height, you might have bent down to see the first leaves of lupin, or trailed your fingers through the soft brush of love-in-the-mist eager to see the light of day. Now, in the thick haze of a late Australian summer, the border is like a giant meadow at its peak.

In gardening circles, Hillandale, a two-and-a-half hour drive west of Sydney, is viewed as one of Australia's best gardens. The six-acre property in the village of Yetholme, first settled by Europeans in 1847, is the highest point in the Blue Mountains, where temperatures can range from -5°C to almost 40°C.

The secluded garden – set in eucalypt forest – has only ever been in the hands of two garden-loving families. While keen to keep the original spirit, the current owners have added a perennial border (overflowing with more than 300 species of rare and interesting plants), a cutting garden and a greenhouse, while extending the garden to include a dam.

The border measures 10m wide by 125m long (and gets longer every year). Imagine the succession of long-flowering plants here from late October to mid-April, as dahlia follows lupin and drifts of ornamental grasses grow to seed. Each plant is left to live its full lifecycle and decay is celebrated.

Miniature sunflower heads of *Helianthus giganteus* 'Sheila's Sunshine' bob on narrow stems above purple asters. Some of the plants, such as the *Macleaya microcarpa* (or plume poppy), have, in just one season, grown as tall as the smallest tree. Bees simmer in the *Cephalaria gigantea*, tiny, superb fairy wrens follow the gardener around, and the grey shrike-thrush bird sings the day. You meet the garden first, not the gardener. She wears her talent modestly, like a plant that grows in the shade.

Sarah and Andrew Ryan moved here 18 years ago and maintain the garden together. They were initially attracted to the property by the quality of the soil, the cool temperate climate, the spring-fed garden with its mature woodland trees, and the tiny creek lined with self-seeding tree ferns, running into a frog-song of a billabong.

Andrew favours a green and manicured look, and trees that are allowed space, while the perennial border (the exact opposite) is Sarah's wild domain, worked for more than 15 years with Impressionistic artistry. Sarah likes visitors to walk through the border when the plants are backlit and the effect is ethereal: you go down in the morning, up in the afternoon. A masterful eye is clearly at work, listening to the lie of the land, painting with foliage and flower, driven by a passion for beauty.

"I'm trying to invite people to walk through the middle, to brush up against the plants and get clouds of insects rising up in front of you," says Sarah. "I want you to have a real encounter, to become part of it. I think it's good for you."

Camellias and 100-year-old rhododendrons contrast with mature conifers, cottonwoods and generous oaks. The effect is quite English, and yet, with eucalypt stands rising out of basalt loam soils, and wallabies grazing at dawn and dusk along the driveway beyond the garden gate, it is unmistakably Australian.

The soil, Sarah says, is "quite acidic", with pH levels sitting between 4.5 and 5.5, which perennials don't seem to mind – in fact, Sarah sees the opposite effect. Colours in both foliage and flower are very intense. She wonders if the area's cold nights followed by hot days also have an effect on intensity, allowing everything to grow to its maximum potential.

In summer, watering takes over, while in winter, wombats leave their tracks in the snow. At 1,150m, the garden is dusted in snow three or four times a year, with up to 50 frosts. Drought is an ever-present threat, and the couple decided not to open the garden this December because of the dry weather.

Sarah has never been to Britain or North America, but the brilliant plantswoman with a designer's flair is a devotee of the perennial movement, heavily influenced by Australian gardeners David Glenn and Michael McCoy, who showed there was another way to garden. Piet Oudolf and Henk Gerritsen's *Dream Plants for the Natural Garden* was also an early influence on Sarah, who was mesmerised by their "tangle of plants".

While Sarah's ultimate goal is to emulate repeated arrangements achieved by nature, with a diversity of species in perfect harmony, she says this is a long way off. Until then she sees her role as taming wildness. Roadside 'weeds' such as *Verbena bonariensis*, for example, are encouraged in moderation; they have the advantage of being beautiful, too.

In grasses, favourite pairings include *Panicum virgatum* 'Heavy Metal', with its metallic-blue leaves tinged to red, and the dusky purple of *Symphyotrichum lateriflorum* 'Lady in Black', or a combination of *Achillea* 'Cherry Ripe' with *Miscanthus oligostachyus* 'Eileen Quinn' and the thistle-like, steel-blue heads of *Eryngium planum* (flat sea holly).

Sarah knows that dahlias don't belong in the prairie look, but she loves seeing grasses contrast with the deep-bronze leaves of 'Bishop of Llandaff' and its red-velvet, semi-double flowers, or the burgundy of 'Black Embers' paired with echinacea, *Hylotelephium* 'Herbstfreude' and the plume poppy.

At the end of autumn, it is all cut down, prunings left in situ, except for the very woody ones, and covered with stable straw. Sarah is laying mulch for an open garden weekend. She can't countenance having such a garden and failing to share it with other people. □

USEFUL INFORMATION

Address Hillandale Garden and Nursery, 287 Eusdale Road, Yetholme, NSW 2795, Australia.

Tel +61 (0)2 6337 5234.

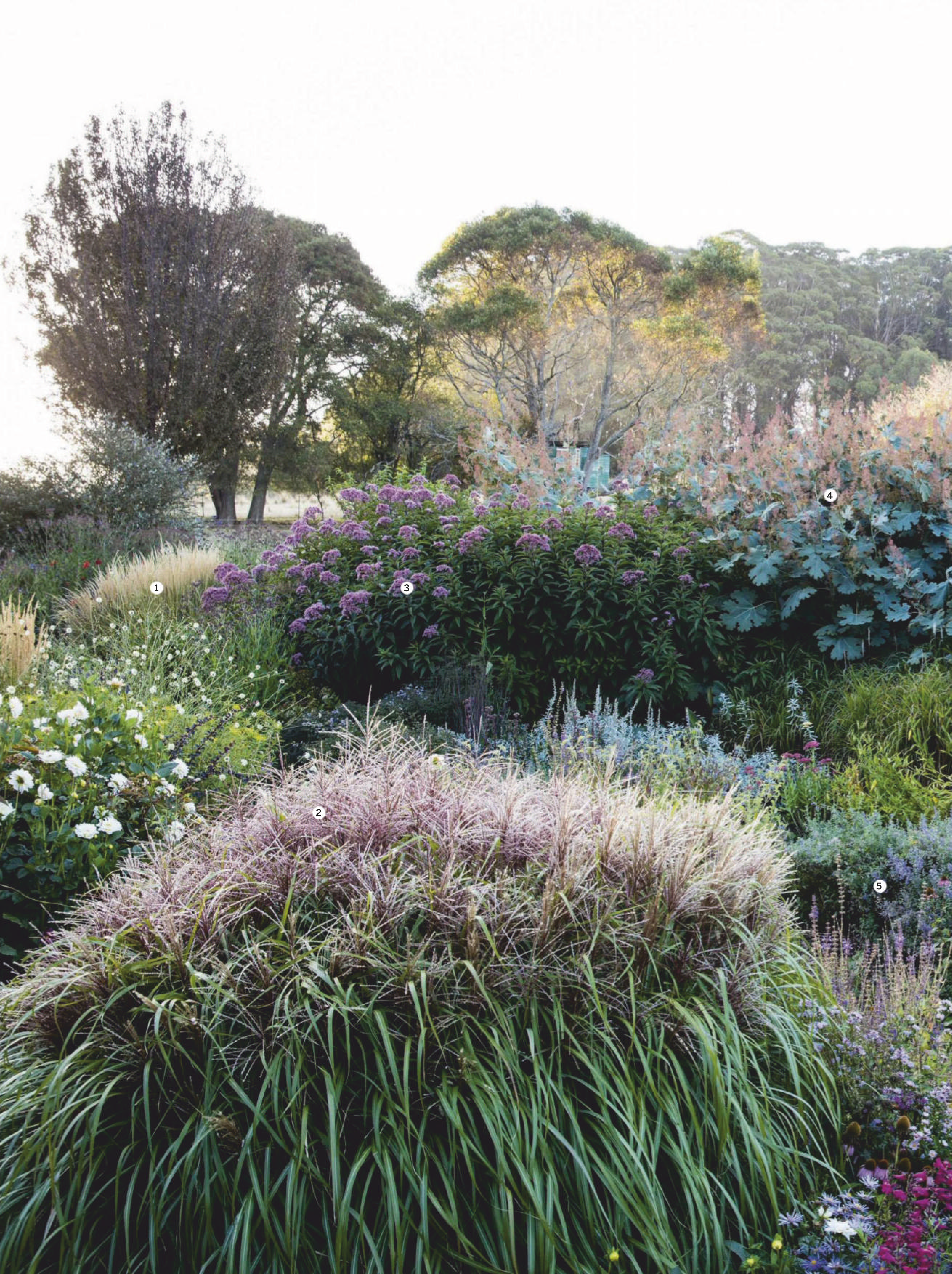
Website hillandalegardenandnursery.com.au

Open On the last weekend of each month until March 2019 (except December 2018); other times by appointment.

Turn the page to see Sarah's planting in the 125m-long perennial border.

IT'S PAINTING WITH FOLIAGE AND FLOWER, DRIVEN BY A PASSION FOR BEAUTY

Sarah has formed a path through the middle of the long herbaceous border, so that visitors can encounter nature by walking through it, touching plants and seeing birds and clouds of insects up close. The plants, backlit on alternated sides by sunrise and sunset, create an ethereal effect, spotlighting the border's soft-focus stars, *Cephalaria gigantea* and *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Flamingo'.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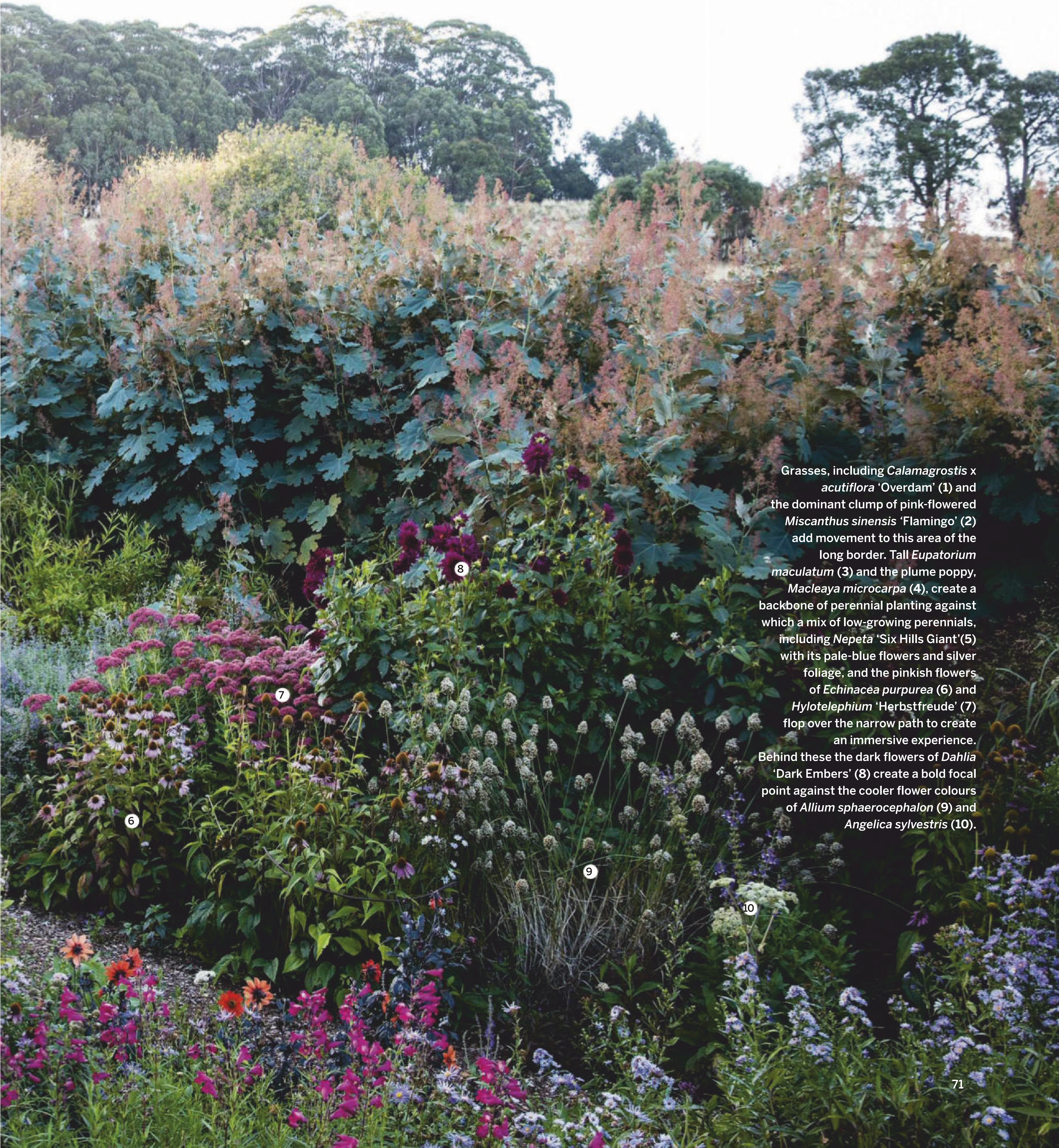
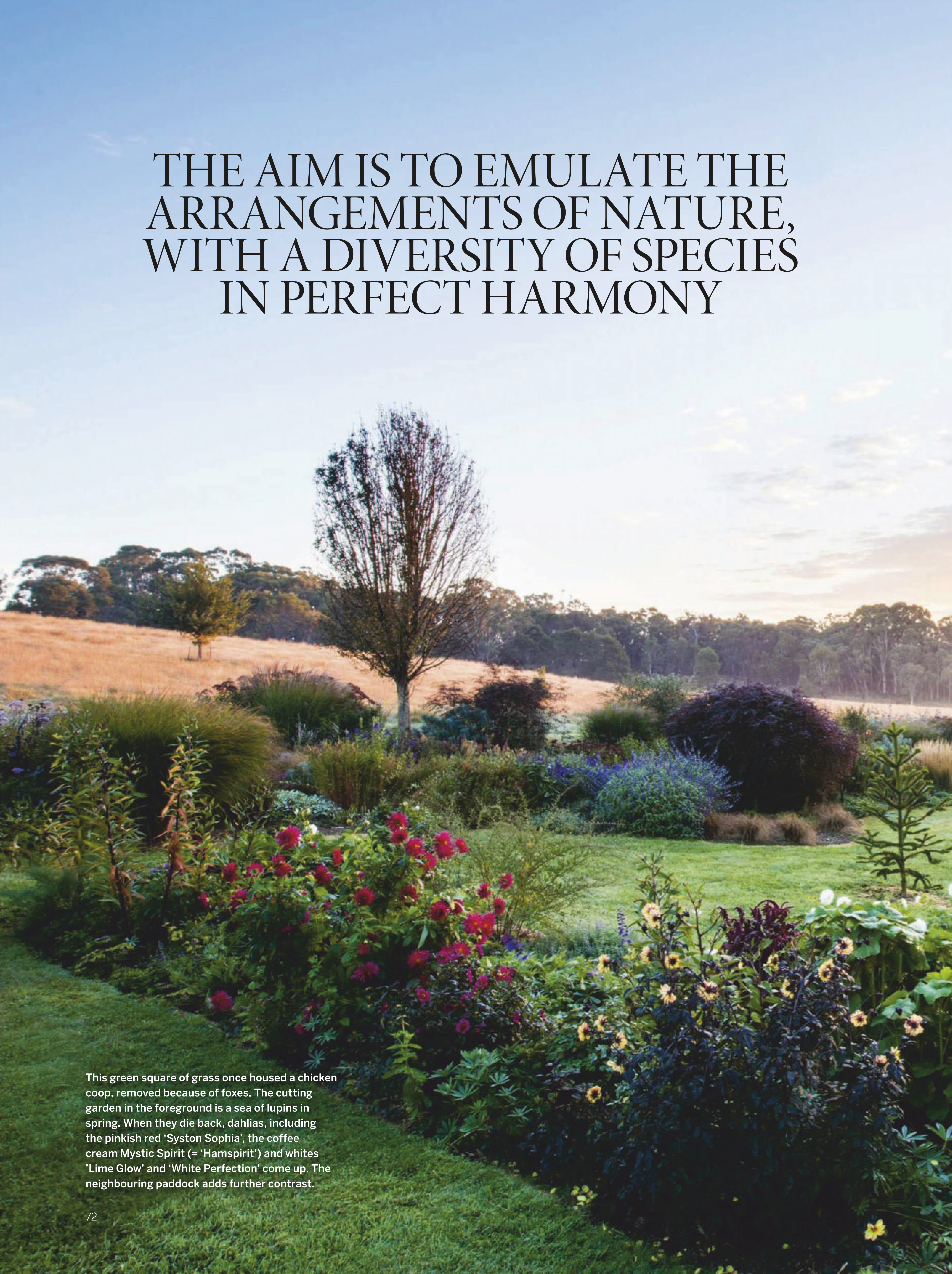
COLOURS ARE VERY INTENSE, A POSSIBLE EFFECT OF THE EXTREMES IN WEATHER



Grasses, including *Calamagrostis* x *acutiflora* 'Overdam' (**1**) and the dominant clump of pink-flowered *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Flamingo' (**2**) add movement to this area of the long border. Tall *Eupatorium maculatum* (**3**) and the plume poppy, *Macleaya microcarpa* (**4**), create a backbone of perennial planting against which a mix of low-growing perennials, including *Nepeta* 'Six Hills Giant'(**5**) with its pale-blue flowers and silver foliage, and the pinkish flowers of *Echinacea purpurea* (**6**) and *Hylotelephium* 'Herbstfreude' (**7**) flop over the narrow path to create an immersive experience. Behind these the dark flowers of *Dahlia* 'Dark Embers' (**8**) create a bold focal point against the cooler flower colours of *Allium sphaerocephalon* (**9**) and *Angelica sylvestris* (**10**).



THE AIM IS TO EMULATE THE ARRANGEMENTS OF NATURE, WITH A DIVERSITY OF SPECIES IN PERFECT HARMONY

This green square of grass once housed a chicken coop, removed because of foxes. The cutting garden in the foreground is a sea of lupins in spring. When they die back, dahlias, including the pinkish red ‘Syston Sophia’, the coffee cream Mystic Spirit (= ‘Hamspirit’) and whites ’Lime Glow’ and ‘White Perfection’ come up. The neighbouring paddock adds further contrast.

Above left Hebe expert Marshall Hutchens (left) is bringing his expert knowledge to stock at Lower Kenneggy Nurseries, working alongside owner Stephen Mules.

This image Just a small selection of the many plants on sale at Lower Kenneggy Nurseries,which specialises in unusual plants and plants for coastal areas.

For over a decade, I have been making the long journey to west Cornwall for the sole purpose of visiting Lower Kenneggy Nurseries. Situated in rolling countryside, just off the Helston road to Penzance, the nursery is half a mile from the coast. It offers many wonderful, unusual plants and is managed by proprietor and plantsman, Stephen Mules. Stephen purchased four acres of land in the 1980s with the intention of creating a market garden growing a few ornamental plants to support his sideline gardening business. Vegetable production proved to be rather arduous and poorly paid, however, while the nursery side of the business prospered and eventually took over.

Stephen recalls the nursery's beginnings: "I started growing ornamentals, including a wide range of fuchsias and bedding plants. Gradually, I've developed and discovered my identity as a nurseryman, and over the past 15 to 20 years we've been specialising in plants for the local climate of west Cornwall." He points out that the local climate is excellent for growing certain types of plants, but is not ideal for others. "Prairie plants and many roses, for instance, do not do well here. We have a seriously mild, maritime climate. We don't get hugely hot summers, but have mild winters and significantly greater rainfall than the more eastern counties of England. The temperature difference between the summer and winter is normally relatively small compared with most of the UK." Although this mild climate means gardeners here can grow a range of ▷

Coasting along

Mild, wet winters and a maritime location influence the eclectic plant selection at a thriving west Cornwall nursery

WORDS MATTHEW REESE PHOTOGRAPHS JASON INGRAM

WITH BRITAIN'S EXTENSIVE COASTLINE, MUCH OF THE OFFERING HERE WILL THRIVE ELSEWHERE IN THE COUNTRY

▷ plants that many of us could not consider for gardens elsewhere, the maritime factor has its drawbacks. Wherever you are in this part of Cornwall, you tend not to be further than three miles from the sea, and the salt-laden winds can blow far inland, having a profound impact on planting.

With Britain's extensive coastline, much of the offering at Lower Kenneggy will thrive elsewhere in the country. Olearias, for example, are among the best plants for providing shelter in a coastal garden. Stephen praises *Olearia* 'Talbot de Malahide' for its smart foliage, large panicles of white flowers and outstanding ability to tolerate salt and wind. Although there are several *Olearia* cultivars available at Lower Kenneggy, Stephen says that many more are in danger of disappearing from cultivation as they are being superseded in the nursery trade by newer and often less superior selections. In an effort to prevent such loss, Stephen is always on the lookout for older cultivars that have stood the test of time to add to the nursery's portfolio. There is a strong contingent of plants from the southern hemisphere – *Eucalyptus*, *Hebe*, *Correa*, *Grevillea*, *Prostanthera* and *Corokia* – as well as a range of succulents that will thrive in a position with good drainage.

Although there is an emphasis at Lower Kenneggy on plants that will thrive locally, there are many that will make excellent garden plants in most areas of the UK, whether on the coast or further inland. There are many rare and unusual species, such as the wonderful *Buddleja forrestii* with its large, willow-like leaves and drooping spikes of scented, milky-mauve flowers, and *Griselinia scandens*, a peculiar-looking, evergreen shrub that is somewhat reminiscent of a cycad with its stiff habit and shiny leaves and is suitable for a ▷

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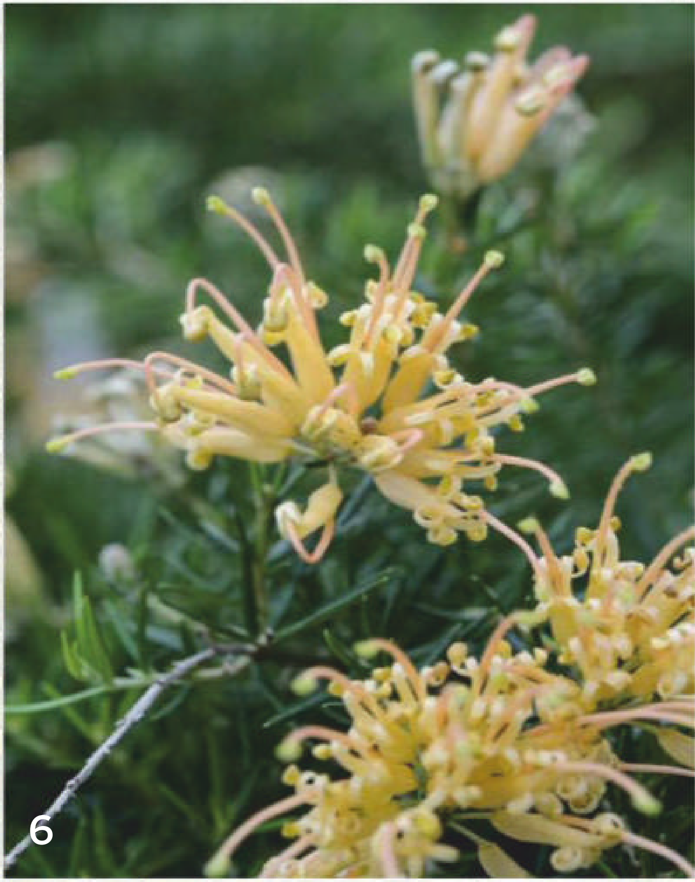
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24 PLANTS FROM LOWER KENNEGGY

1 *Grevillea rhyolitica*
A good medium-sized shrub for a sheltered site that will take light frosts. Flowers are produced on pendent racemes above ovate foliage from late spring into summer, and all year at Lower Kenneggy. 1-2m. RHS H3†.

2 *Aeonium* 'Cyclops'
A dramatic hybrid, with long stems topped with dark-purple rosettes, each with a green eye. Panicles of starry yellow flowers are produced in spring. Makes a striking pot plant. 1.5m. RHS H1C.

3 *Tibouchina paratropica*
Makes numerous round, pink flowers through the summer. It can die back to the rootstock in colder greenhouses over winter; otherwise it remains shrubby. Resents being kept wet. 60cm. RHS H3.

4 *Canna* 'Phasion'
Wonderful foliage with pale amber stripes on a darker background. Looks brilliant when backlit and is a useful component for an exotic effect. Needs good, moist soil. Sold at Lower Kenneggy as *C.* 'Durban'. 2m. AGM*. RHS H3.

5 *Pseudopanax* 'Chainsaw'
An unusual upright shrub raised at Lower Kenneggy. The dark, bronzed foliage has more pronounced toothed leaves than the straight species and was shown at RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2018. 3m. RHS H3.

6 *Grevillea juniperina* 'Molonglo'
A vigorous, groundcovering grevillea that makes thick carpets of fine, fresh green leaves. Produces apricot-yellow flowers from summer onwards. Resents all but specialist fertiliser. 40cm. RHS H4.

7 *Musa basjoo*
A hardy banana topped with huge, paddle-like leaves. Severe frosts will cut it down, though it will regrow in spring. Insulate stems in winter to maintain height. 3m. AGM. RHS H2, USDA 5a-10b.

8 *Grevillea* 'Bairnsdale'
Compact evergreen shrub with rounded habit. Red flowers held in densely packed terminal racemes are produced summer to autumn. One of the most frost -hardy grevilleas. 2m. RHS H2.

9 *Fuchsia* x *bacillaris*
Small shrubby fuchsia producing arching stems with small, vibrant-green leaves and punchy-pink flowers. Plant in spring in a sheltered site to give the best chance of survival in winter. 90cm. RHS H4.

10 *Agave montana*
An *Agave* from the mountains of northeast Mexico, which is hardy if planted in free-draining soil and given full sun. Very spiky. 1m. RHS H4.

11 *Nerine masoniorum*
A pretty autumn-flowering bulb that thrives in free-draining soil in full sun. Produces spider-like flowers with wavy edges held atop strong stems. From South Africa. 30cm. AGM. RHS H2.

12 *Puya harmsii*
This terrestrial bromeliad from the Argentinean Andes can be hardy provided it does not sit too wet during the colder months of the year. It makes large, silver rosettes of stiff, sometimes spiky, leaves. 1m. RHS H2.

Turn the page for more plants

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*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society. †Hardiness ratings given where available.

> STEPHEN IS DISCERNING WHEN IT COMES TO DECIDING WHICH PLANTS TO OFFER – IT'S MUCH BETTER TO GROW FEWER THINGS WELL

▷ shady position. More commonplace (though no less excellent) garden plants, such as the long-flowering *Geranium* 'Mavis Simpson', are also considered worthy of selling space. The shade area houses various ferns, including the stunning *Dryopteris wallichiana*, as well as hydrangeas, camellias and rhododendrons, but the selection is never too huge or overwhelming. For gardeners with glasshouse space, there are plants such as pelargoniums and *Tibouchina* that require protection.

Stephen is discerning when it comes to deciding which plants to offer for sale: "It's much better to grow fewer things well than to try to grow everything and not do it properly." In order for a plant to make the cut, Stephen has to like it and see potential in it. It is also important for that particular plant to fit in with what else is grown at the nursery. A dwarf conifer, for example, would stick out like a sore thumb.

Lower Kenneggy is a rather special nursery that caters in particular to local gardeners, but is also able to provide plants (along with honest and helpful advice) for a wider client base. I, for one, have discovered many treasured plants here, such as the handsome *Fuchsia hatschbachii*, with its elegant flowers and smart foliage, and *Hydrangea macrophylla* 'Beauté Vendômoise', a lacecap with exceptionally large florets. Visitors will no doubt find their own favourites. ☐

USEFUL INFORMATION

Address Lower Kenneggy Nurseries, Rosudgeon, Penzance, Cornwall TR20 9AR.
Tel 01736 762959 / 07584 838695.
Website lowerkenneggynurseries.co.uk
Open March to November, Tuesdays to Saturdays, 10am-5pm.

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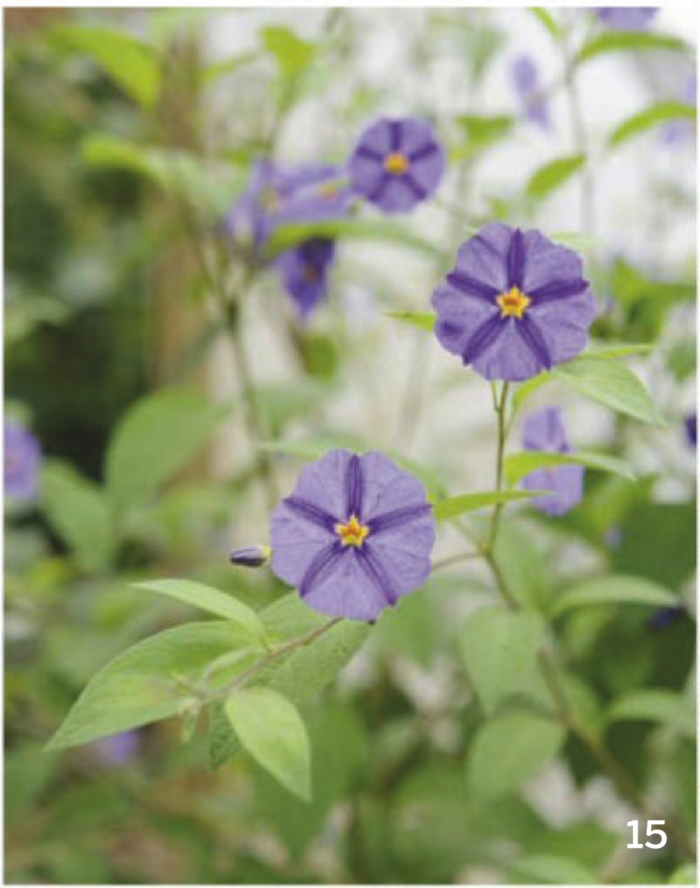

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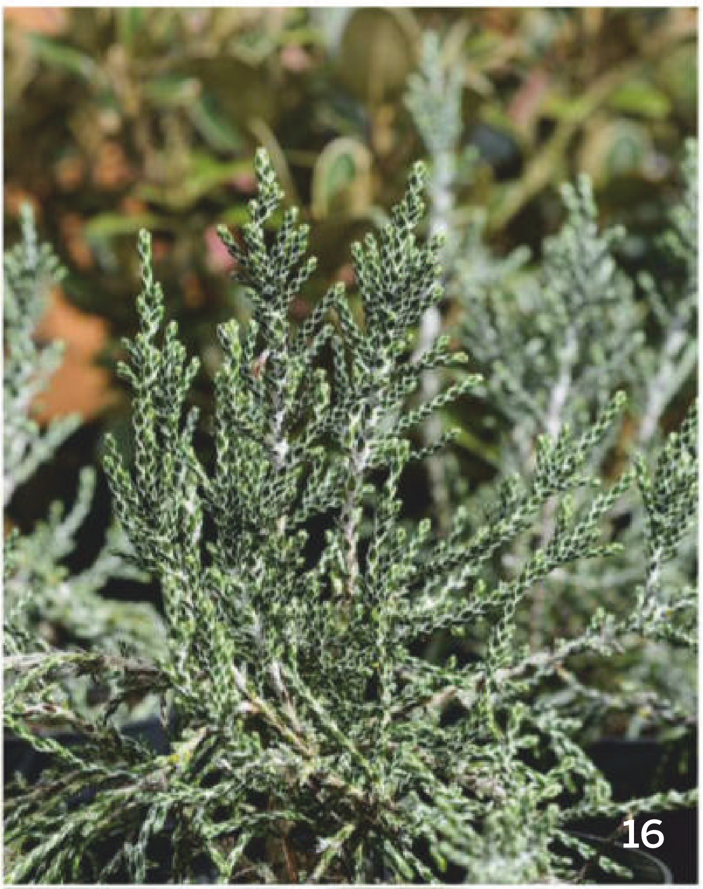

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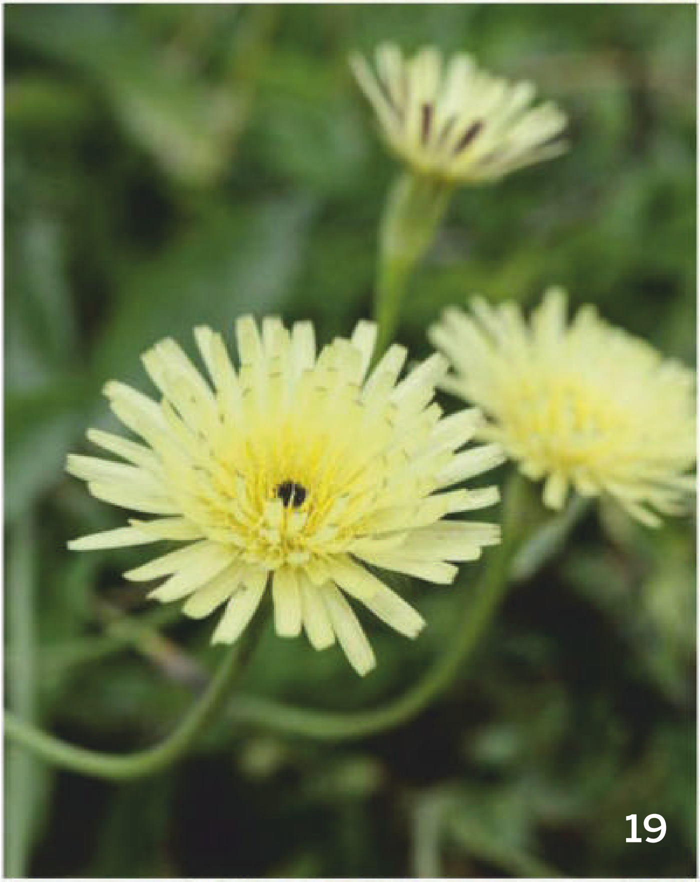

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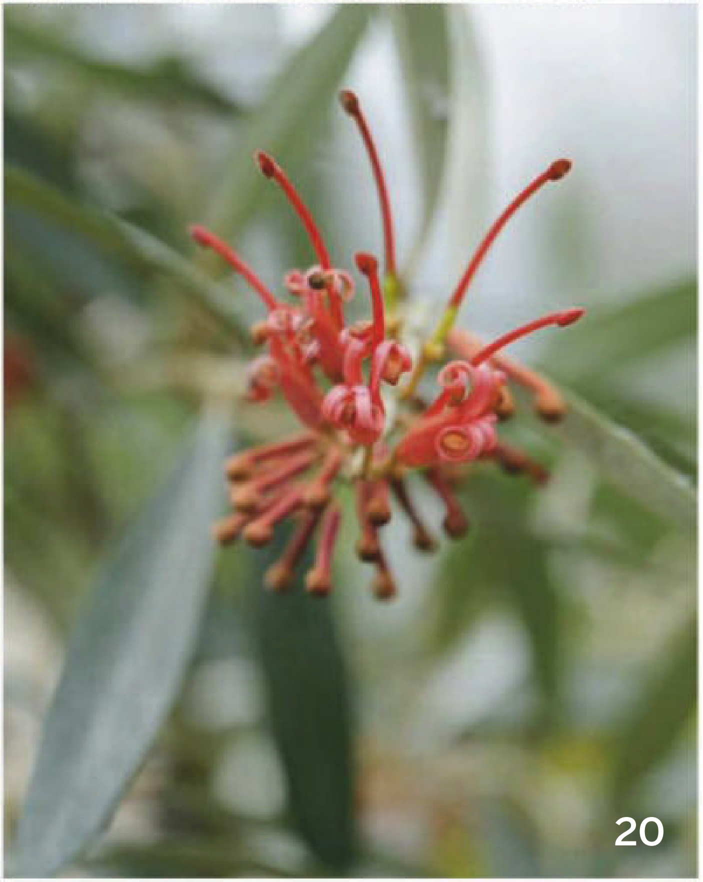

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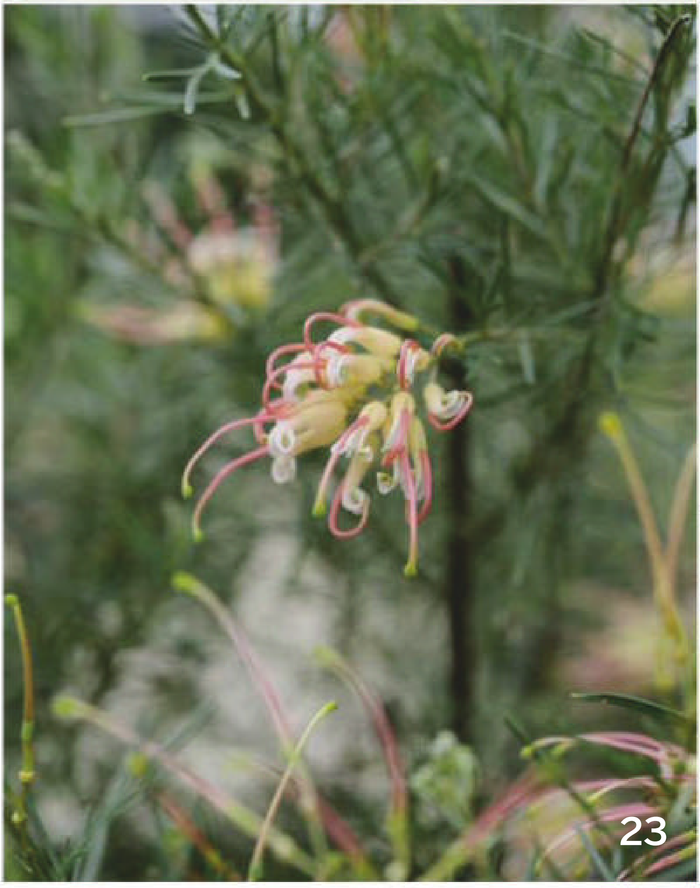

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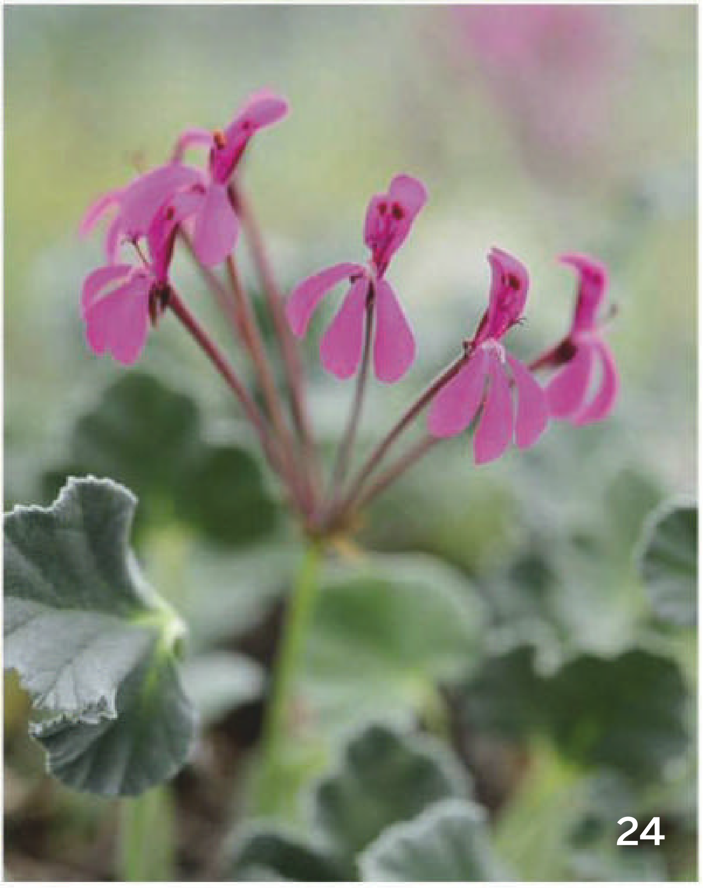

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24 PLANTS CONTINUED

13 *Correa pulchella* 'Pink Mist'
A compact cultivar of the Australian fuchsia with larger flowers than the straight species. It flowers during the autumn and winter months. Needs shelter in cold regions, but is tolerant of salt. 75cm. RHS H3.

14 *Grevillea* 'Bronze Rambler'
A strong-growing, prostate grevillea that makes mounds of attractive ferny foliage. The long flower spikes are a strong rose colour. New growth is tinged bronze. 30cm. RHS H3.

15 *Lycianthes rantonnetii*
A shrubby potato relative with large, violet flowers produced on the new growth. It does best when pruned hard back in the spring. Protect during the winter months. 2m. AGM. RHS H3.

16 *Ozothamnus selago*
A small, unusual-looking shrub from New Zealand with a sprawling habit. It has silver stems and small, scale-like leaves. Best in free-draining soils that see plenty of rain. 40cm. RHS H6.

17 *Buddleja forrestii*
A small tree with large, drooping leaves and long, pendulous flower sprays that can reach up to 25cm in length. Flowers are produced on the new wood. Hardy once established. 4m. RHS H3.

18 *Salvia corrugata*
A late-flowering South American sage with good, dark foliage. Dark-blue flowers with purple calyces are produced in September. Good both in pots and in the border. 80cm. RHS H3.

19 *Urospermum dalechampii*
A beautiful alpine dandelion, commonly known as smooth golden fleece. The flowers, produced during the summer months, are butter-yellow with a dark eye. 40cm. RHS H4.

20 *Grevillea victoriae*
Rounded, Australian shrub with small, evergreen leaves. Produces orange-red, spidery flowers throughout the winter months. Dislikes soil that is too wet or limey, otherwise easy to grow. 1.5m. RHS H4.

21 *Roscoea purpurea* f. *rubra*
A wonderful *Roscoea* from the Himalayas, with leek-like foliage and good red flowers in summer. Needs rich, free-draining soil that doesn't get too dry in the warmer months. 30cm. RHS H3.

22 *Salvia microphylla* 'Cerro Potosí'
A hardy sage that produces masses of bright-magenta flowers on the new growth from summer until frosts. Often still in flower well into November. It will tolerate heavier soils once established. 1m. AGM. RHS H4.

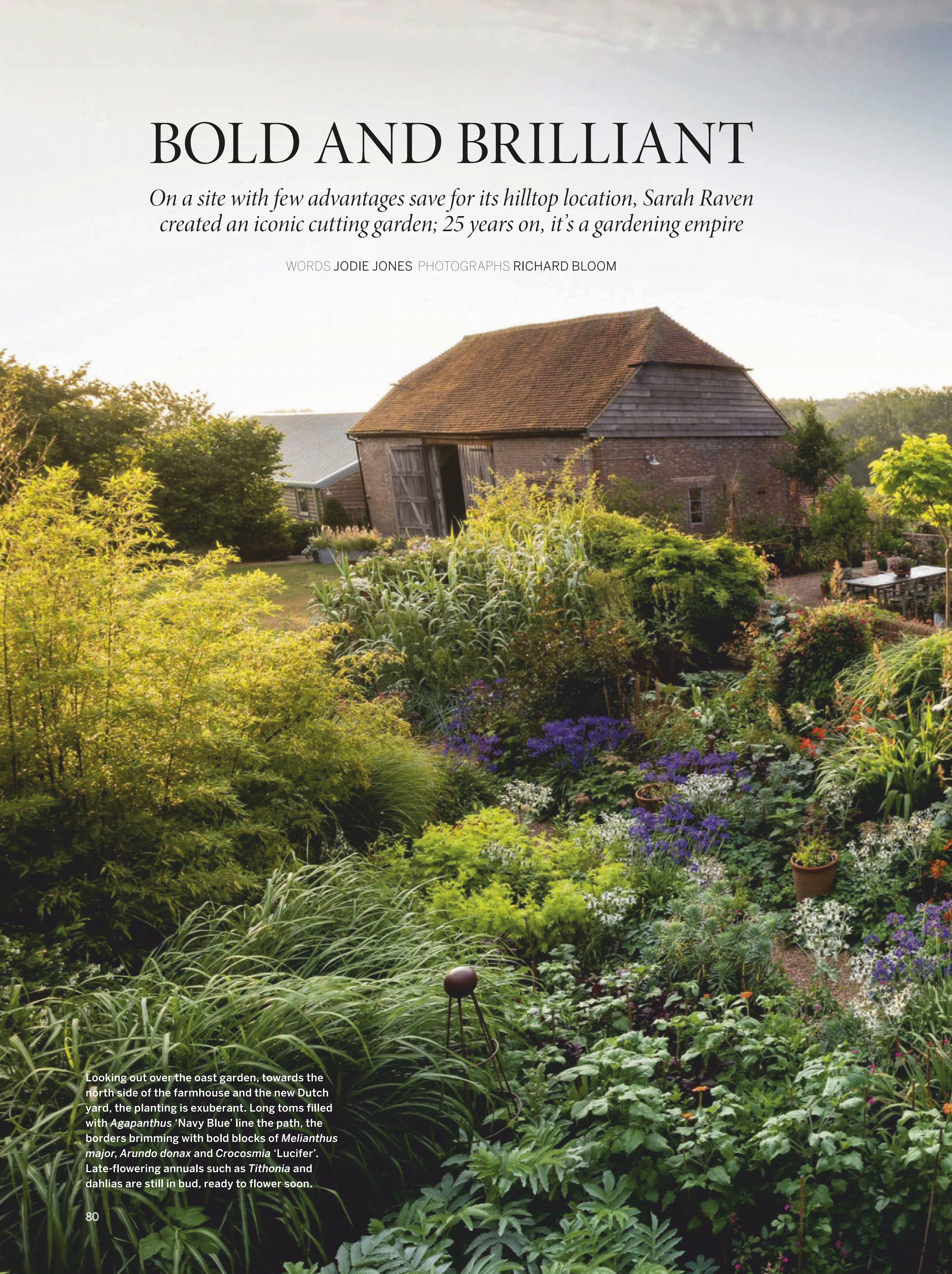
23 *Grevillea* x *semperflorens*
This attractive, medium-sized shrub is nearly always in flower, producing a constant supply of apricot-pink, spidery flowers atop fine, spring-green foliage. Provide a warm site with acidic, free-draining soil. 2m. RHS H3.

24 *Pelargonium sidoides* 'Sloe Gin Fizz'
Produces mounds of soft, silvery, scallop-shaped leaves. Groups of small, vivid, magenta-pink flowers are held above the foliage. Makes an excellent pot plant for a frost-free conservatory. 30cm. RHS H2.

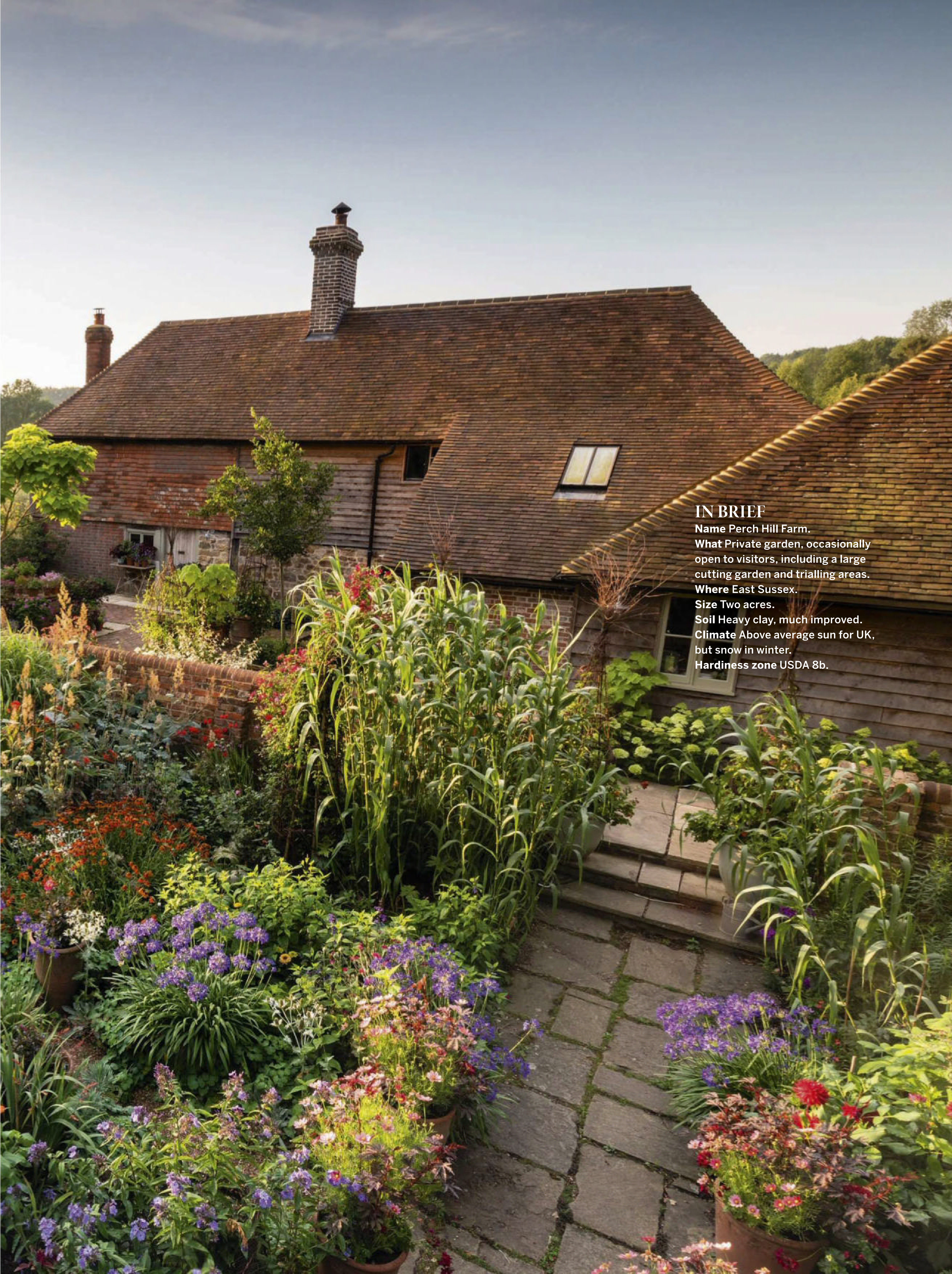
BOLD AND BRILLIANT

On a site with few advantages save for its hilltop location, Sarah Raven created an iconic cutting garden; 25 years on, it's a gardening empire

WORDS JODIE JONES PHOTOGRAPHS RICHARD BLOOM



Looking out over the oast garden, towards the north side of the farmhouse and the new Dutch yard, the planting is exuberant. Long toms filled with *Agapanthus* 'Navy Blue' line the path, the borders brimming with bold blocks of *Melianthus major*, *Arundo donax* and *Crocosmia* 'Lucifer'. Late-flowering annuals such as *Tithonia* and dahlias are still in bud, ready to flower soon.



IN BRIEF

Name Perch Hill Farm.
What Private garden, occasionally open to visitors, including a large cutting garden and trialling areas.
Where East Sussex.
Size Two acres.
Soil Heavy clay, much improved.
Climate Above average sun for UK, but snow in winter.
Hardiness zone USDA 8b.

Driving down the winding green lane that leads to Sarah Raven's Sussex home, it is easy to miss a discreet sign marking the way in to Perch Hill Farm, but navigate an entrance bounded by native hedgerows and you are hit by an explosion of colour. Masses of dahlias in rich shades of orange, magenta and plum flank the grassy driveway. On either side, the garden extends away in a grid of brick paths, clipped hedges and axial vistas all but obliterated by an excess of roses, sweet peas, cosmos and salvias. Kale and colourful lettuces decorate one slope like a pointillist canvas, and the white cowl of a pretty oast house is silhouetted by trees.

It all looked very different 25 years ago, when Sarah first walked up the drive. Back then she was keen to move out of London with her baby daughter and husband (the journalist Adam Nicolson, grandson of Vita Sackville-West), and had already spent many months house hunting when she stumbled on what one neighbour called 'the poorest farm in the parish'. Perched, as its name suggests, on a windswept hill, the modest house was marooned in a sea of concrete and surrounded by a selection of outbuildings in various stages of decrepitude. Overlooking the property's obvious shortcomings, Sarah was entranced by the glorious fields and woods that rolled away in every direction. "The house was a disaster, but I just knew it was the place for us," she says.

Few would have agreed with her at the time. Adam's three sons from his first marriage often came to stay and the house wasn't big enough to accommodate everyone, so the family adopted an eccentric style of living in a selection of outbuildings as well as the farmhouse, much as Adam's father Nigel Nicolson had done when growing up at Sissinghurst. "At one point the only loo was outside across the courtyard," says Sarah. "It certainly wasn't glamorous."

Despite working long hours as a trainee doctor, Sarah began to make a garden on the flattest bit of land near the house (now part of the trials garden), so she could stay close to the family hub while she dug. "I grew up botanising with my father and made a garden when I lived in London, so it was the natural thing to do." With little money to spare, she sowed annuals in the rich Venetian shades now associated with her name. "I have an instinctive reaction to colour," she says. "I had done some floristry in London, and got so bored with pastel colours. I wanted bold, velvety drama."

The gardener and author Christopher Lloyd, a family friend, visited soon after the family moved in. "He took one look at the heavy clay soil, and told me I might as well move because it would never make a garden," laughs Sarah. Undeterred, she brought in tonnes of compost to improve the soil and planted hedges to baffle the winds. When the ground became waterlogged, she put in land drains. When the hedges were blown flat, she improvised hurdle fences (chestnut poles interwoven with inexpensive roofing lathes) to protect them while they established.

Sarah laid the first paths herself, extending level areas where the sloping terrain allowed, and slotting in steps to link them. "We just made it up as we went along," she says. The ugliest outbuildings were gradually demolished and the rest improved. Friend and landscape designer Pip Morrison planned the rose garden, but otherwise the layout evolved organically as time and funds allowed.

The only insurmountable obstacle in those early years was the morning sickness that blighted Sarah's second pregnancy, so she never completed her medical training. Instead, she spent more and more time in her garden. "Maybe it was my analytical, medical background, but the minute I started growing things I began charting their performance. I wanted flowers to cut for the house, so it was logical for me to record which varieties produced the most pickings and lasted longest in the vase."

Consequently, she already had a sheaf of notes on the subject when her husband met the publisher Frances Lincoln at a friend's wedding. "Frances wanted to produce a book about growing cut flowers but didn't know who to commission. When Adam told her about my cutting garden project she asked me to send her a proposal by Monday." That outline, produced in the course of one rather stressful weekend, became *The Cutting Garden*, named Best Specialist Book of 1999 by the prestigious Garden Media Guild.

Friends who read the book asked if Sarah would give a talk on the subject. Visitors who admired her unusual varieties of sweet pea and antirrhinum begged to buy them. Frances commissioned another book (*The Bold and Brilliant Garden*), this time featuring perennials. Sarah's name had suddenly become a business selling dinner-plate-sized dahlias, gourmet vegetable seeds and the sort of wellies you wouldn't mind being seen out in. "There never was a grand plan," she says. "My first catalogue was a folded sheet of A4 paper which I coloured in on the kitchen table. Since then I've had successes, but there were also times when I lost money. I was just mad enough to keep trying."

These days, with friend and company co-founder Louise Farman, Sarah employs more than 50 people, including a team of four gardeners headed up by Josie Lewis. With the day-to-day running of the garden in safe hands, and her children grown up, Sarah is free to travel widely in search of new varieties to trial. She also lectures regularly and is currently working on her 11th book, this time exploring the gardener's colour palette.

"I never imagined all of this happening, but I love what I do. I wake up thinking about a particular dahlia and what I might put with it. Perch Hill is my passion and my life's work." □

USEFUL INFORMATION

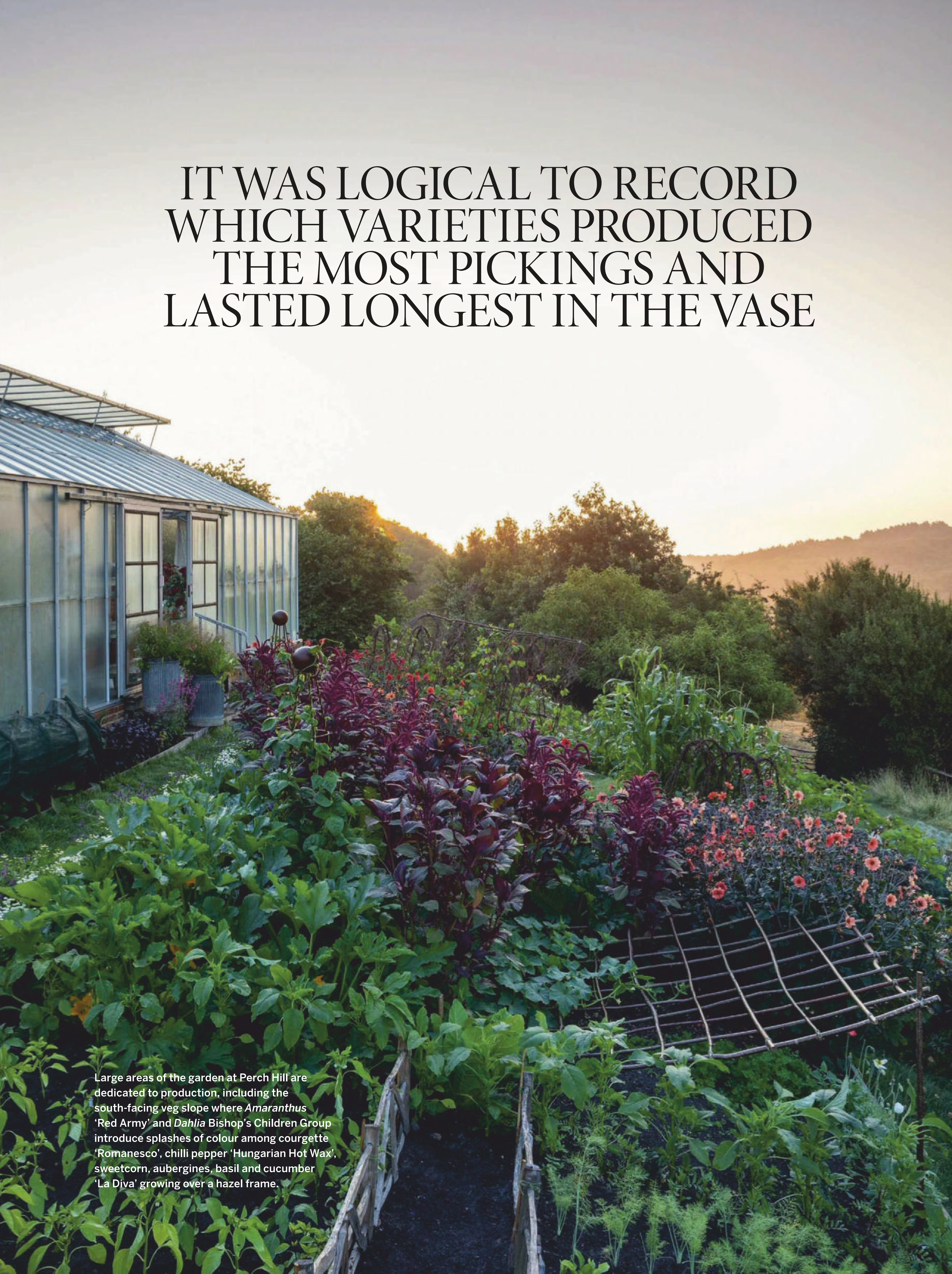
Address Perch Hill Farm, Willingford Lane, Brightling, Robertsbridge, East Sussex TN32 5HP.

Tel 0345 092 0283. **Website** sarahraven.com

Open The garden can be visited on open days. The shop is also open on these days, but otherwise only on weekdays by appointment, or on Christmas shopping days. Visit the website above for details of 2019 open day dates, courses and online shopping.

Turn the page to see more of Sarah's garden.

IT WAS LOGICAL TO RECORD WHICH VARIETIES PRODUCED THE MOST PICKINGS AND LASTED LONGEST IN THE VASE



Large areas of the garden at Perch Hill are dedicated to production, including the south-facing veg slope where *Amaranthus* 'Red Army' and *Dahlia* Bishop's Children Group introduce splashes of colour among courgette 'Romanesco', chilli pepper 'Hungarian Hot Wax', sweetcorn, aubergines, basil and cucumber 'La Diva' growing over a hazel frame.

This image *Dahlia* ‘Totally Tangerine’ is the earliest from Sarah’s trials to bloom, and flowers into autumn. It fits well in the redbrick Dutch yard with the terracotta *Rosa* ‘Cinco de Mayo’.

Below New hybrid echinaceas are on trial, such as the doubles ‘Marmalade’ and ‘Eccentric’, which flower first, and the singles ‘Green Envy’ and ‘Green Jewel’, which continue the show.

This image Self-sown annuals and biennials such as bronze fennel and *Onopordon* create a low-effort display among roses and an olive in the sheltered, south-facing farmhouse garden.

Above *Stipa gigantea* is perfect for frothy structure in the cutting garden beside beds that produce scented, long-lasting narcissi from February to May and dahlias from late June to December .

I HAVE AN INSTINCTIVE REACTION TO COLOUR; I WANT BOLD, VELVETY DRAMA

The dahlia trial garden is enclosed by a delightfully quirky split chestnut fence designed by Sarah's husband, Adam Nicolson, to keep rabbits at bay. Sarah visits trials in the Netherlands every year and selects new cultivars to assess at Perch Hill before including them in her catalogue range.

LESSONS LEARNED

1 Don't be overly polite. If everything is too tasteful, the garden will become bland. Remember, there is no such thing as a bad colour, although there can be bad combinations of colour.

2 You need a few star turns – those show-stopper plants that will get all the attention. But you also need a bit of rice with your curry – the hedges, paths and terraces that hold the garden together. And if I had my time over again, I would put in more structural planting.

3 Sowing seed and propagating from cuttings are two of the best things you can do to improve your mental state. Raising your own plants is tremendously relaxing.

4 Harvesting from your garden, whether you are cutting vegetables or a vase of flowers, is a very positive thing to do. Regularly walking through the garden makes you aware of its strengths and weaknesses, and looking closely means you keep on top of what needs to be done.

5 Soil is everything. Get to know what you have and put all your energy into improving it as far as you can.

PRESENTED TO
STUART FORD
FOR EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE
TO THE CRAFT OF HEDGELAYING
BY
HRH THE PRINCE OF WALES
ON BEHALF OF
THE NATIONAL HEDGELAYING
SOCIETY
FEBRUARY 2013

DAVID CHEDGY / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

BRANCHING OUT

Concern over the decline in British hedgerows and the survival of traditional hedge-laying skills led to the foundation of the National Hedge Laying Society – it's now in its 40th year

WORDS **ALYS HURN** PHOTOGRAPHS **JASON INGRAM**

Hedge laying is no mean feat. It requires precision and strength to pleach, bind and crop stems into place but there's no doubt that when finished, a traditionally laid hedge is a sight to behold. "In my day it was looked on as a yobbo's lot," laughs retired hedge layer Mick Haynes. Mick, now 95, can remember earning £10 a week from hedge cutting at a time when the average weekly wage was just over £4. "When I went into hedge cutting, my father, who was a bank manager, thought I was the lowest of the low," says Mick. 'But I became a contractor and did very well." Mick is casting his expert eye over the competitors at the National Hedge Laying Championship in the Cambridgeshire village of Barton. It's an annual competition organised by the National Hedge Laying Society (NHLS), which this year celebrates its 40th anniversary, and despite the fact that today's competition feels like a very male affair, the society owes its foundation to a forceful and dedicated woman called Valerie Greaves.

In 1978, deeply concerned for the decline in British hedgerows and the survival of traditional hedge-laying skills, Valerie encouraged two other keen hedge layers, Fred Whitefoot and Clive Matthew, to join her in becoming founding members of the NHLS and to promote the hedge as a national asset. They established the National Hedge Laying Championship in the same year to give the craft a competitive edge and help improve the skills of hedge layers. It started small, with two Midland-style classes and two Welsh-style classes. Over the years, the society has steadily grown and this year's championship had more than 100 competitors cutting 12 different styles between them, from the tall, bushy Midland style, also known as a Midland Bullock, designed to contain large stock animals, to the low Devon style, which is laid on top of a bank. There are believed to be more than 30 regional styles of hedge laying in all and each type depends on the lay of the land and the farming practices of each region.

In the years before the society was formed, hedges had been in rapid decline. During and after the Second World War arable land doubled in area to accommodate the demand for food production. Farmers, encouraged by the government, grubbed out hedges to make space for the monster-sized machines needed to cultivate these vast new spaces. According to the NHLS, between 1947 and 1985 around 155,000km of hedge were removed. Traditionally, hedge laying was winter work, a task that filled the time when fields lay empty. But intensive farming and mechanisation changed the way farmers worked. Many neglected hedges grew into big trees, and farmers adapted to using tractors with flails to ▷

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An example of a Midland-style hedge, built to withstand large animals such as horses and cattle leaning against it.

A hedge layer carries a bundle of stakes over one shoulder. Stakes add strength and form to the framework of a hedge.

To the relief of many cutters, chainsaws have largely replaced the heavy axe traditionally used to cut a pleacher.

Traditional and bespoke tools are part of a hedge layer's kit alongside protective clothing and eye protection.

Tina Bath is one of the few female competitors at the NHLS championship. Here she is cutting a pleacher.

The awards given to hedge-laying champions feature mini billhooks – tools for cutting and trimming the woody growth.

A HEALTHY HEDGE HAS A VITAL ROLE IN REVERSING THE DECLINE OF MANY NATIVE PLANTS AND ANIMALS

▷ trim overgrown hedges, negating the cost of hiring a hedge layer. But this left the base of the hedge untouched and 'gappy' – a technical term – not the stock-proof defence it was intended to be.

To widen the appeal of a traditional laid hedge, forward-thinking NHLS member John Savings made a display of miniature bonsai hedges, laid in different regional styles, that he transported around the country. In 2001, at the Game Fair held at Shuttleworth College, the quirky exhibit caught the eye of HRH The Prince of Wales. John was allocated two minutes to talk to the Prince but their conversation lasted almost half an hour and by the end, John had offered the intrigued Prince a practical hedge-laying lesson. Prince Charles accepted and John went to the Prince's Gloucestershire home Highgrove to provide individual lessons. Prince Charles is now a competent hedge layer and patron of the NHLS.

Royalty isn't the only authority to have sought advice from the NHLS. In 1993, Valerie Greaves and Fred Whitefoot were called to give evidence to the House of Commons Select Committee on Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs. The pair gave valuable insights into the state of Britain's hedgerows and the importance of keeping up the management of the hedges. However, as the minutes record, Valerie was more concerned with encouraging the management of hedges as boundaries, than the environmental role they have to play. 'If the hedge is doing its job as a hedge,' she told the committee, 'then by all means let it be used to conserve wildlife – an excellent idea – as long as it keeps its dual role and is not kept purely for, or as, a zoo.' But, despite her aversion to hedges acting as a home for wildlife, a healthy hedge has been acknowledged as having a vital role in reversing the decline of many native plants and animals, and in the past couple of decades the environmental impact of losing Britain's hedges has become a key concern: 'preserving the past, protecting the future' is the NHLS motto.

The biggest challenge facing the society is attracting a new generation of hedge layers. Like Mick Haynes, most of the society's members are men who have continued to lay hedges long after retirement. At this year's championship, five members competed in the junior class, laying the Lancashire and Westmorland style, with many an established member praising their cutting ability. The society offers financial awards for young hedge layers and has an ongoing programme with schools and the North Cotswold Conservation Board. There are few female competitors – only three attended this year's championship. Claire Maymon, media officer for the society feels many women are put off by the physicality of laying a hedge, and admits that there is an old-fashioned attitude to women laying hedges. Perhaps if more people knew the NHLS had been founded by an independent female hedge layer, more women would be inspired to take up the billhook and compete. ❑

USEFUL INFORMATION

Find out more about the work of National Hedge Laying Society and the National Hedge Laying Championships at **hedgelaying.org.uk**

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Many NHLS members continue cutting well into their eighties and compete regularly for the Supreme Champion Award.

Prince Charles, the Patron of the NHLS and himself a competent hedge layer, takes in a competitor's near-finished hedge.

Points are awarded for effectiveness as a stock barrier, cutting and laying, tidiness of site and quality of finished hedge.

Competitors have five hours to complete up to ten metres of hedge in their chosen regional style.

Pleachers or stems are cut at an angle and need to be laid with some upward slant to allow the sap to rise through the plant.

A competitor uses a spark hook, a type of billhook, to trim the top of the hedge and improve its overall appearance.

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The course is led by **Andrew Fisher Tomlin, designer and Chartered Horticulturist**, and we are fortunate to have **some incredible specialist lecturers** including Neil Lucas of Knoll Gardens, Tony Kirkham from the **Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew** and Nigel Dunnett from the **University of Sheffield**. Designer tutors include James Basson, Jo Thompson, Paul Hervey-Brookes, Ann-Marie Powell, Carolyn Willitts and Amanda Patton.

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DOWNTOOLS

Favourite books, competition, crossword, back issues

SHELF OBSESSIONS

Designer Andy Sturgeon reveals the garden books he treasures the most

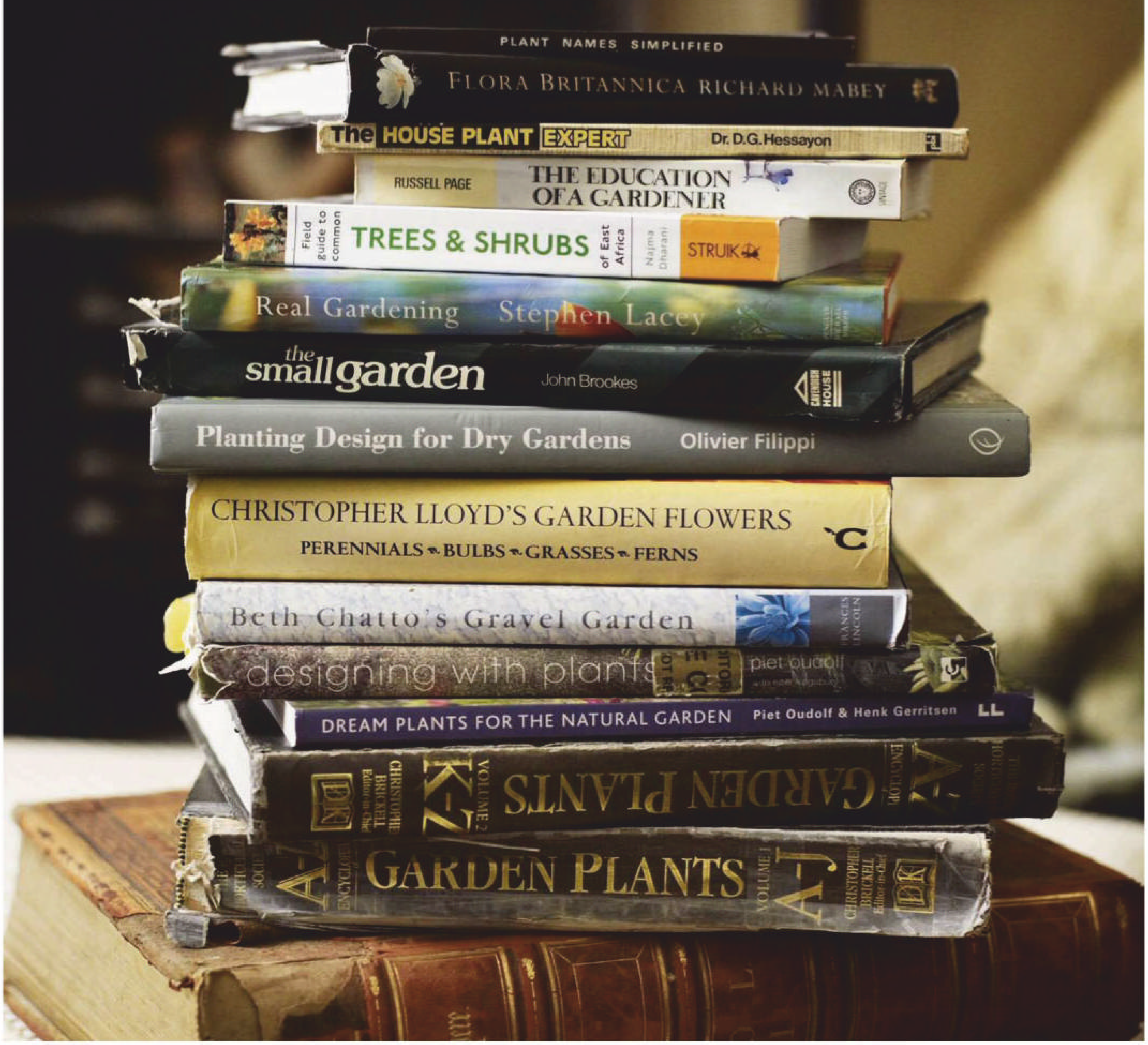
PHOTOGRAPHS **ANDREW MONTGOMERY**

> *"Owning a lot of books and having dipped into most of them I can say that I owe much of my success and most of my knowledge to them"*

While at horticultural college I studied interior landscaping, which essentially means growing tropical and sub-tropical plants inside, something that immediately went out of fashion and my course was promptly axed. I've since been a gardener, a garden writer and a garden designer. I am trained in none of these areas but owning a lot of books and having dipped into most of them I can say that I owe much of my success and most of my knowledge to them. I find being around books and the information they contain incredibly reassuring and anchoring.

I paid too much for my house in Brighton because it has its own library and then promptly built another one in my studio at work. Looking around I now wonder if I'm classed as a hoarder? It was tempting to pluck out a bunch of high-brow titles for this feature to portray myself as staggeringly profound and exceptionally well read. But when I scanned my shelves looking for the books that mean the most to me, I realised that that approach was going to be difficult.

My shelves groan with reference books into which I have repeatedly dived head first. Whether it's *Beth Chatto's Gravel Garden*, half a dozen books on Islamic patterns and gardens or something obscure about plant folklore they are all there looking down at me. I also have yards and yards of coffee table gardening porn to flick through in snatched minutes rather than ponderous hours. What I am not inclined to do is to sit by the fire and digest 500 pages of dense text. For me gardening is about 'doing' so I'm not interested academic tomes and turgid history, I just want the information and I usually want it quickly.


PLANT NAMES SIMPLIFIED
FLORA BRITANNICA RICHARD MABEY
The HOUSE PLANT EXPERT Dr. D.G.Hessayon
RUSSELL PAGE THE EDUCATION OF A GARDENER
Field guide to common TREES & SHRUBS of East Africa Najma Dharani STRUIK
Real Gardening Stephen Lacey
the small garden John Brookes
Planting Design for Dry Gardens Olivier Filippi
CHRISTOPHER LLOYD'S GARDEN FLOWERS PERENNIALS BULBS GRASSES FERNS
Beth Chatto's Gravel Garden
designing with plants piet oudolf
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K-Z GARDEN PLANTS
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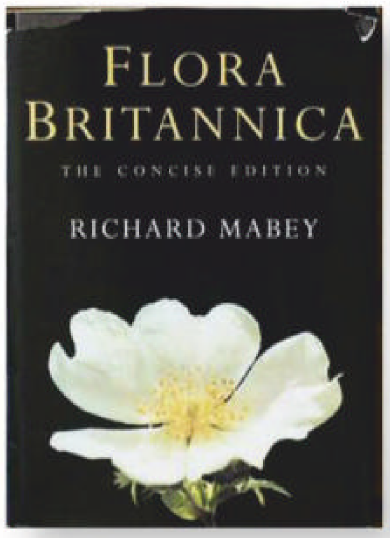
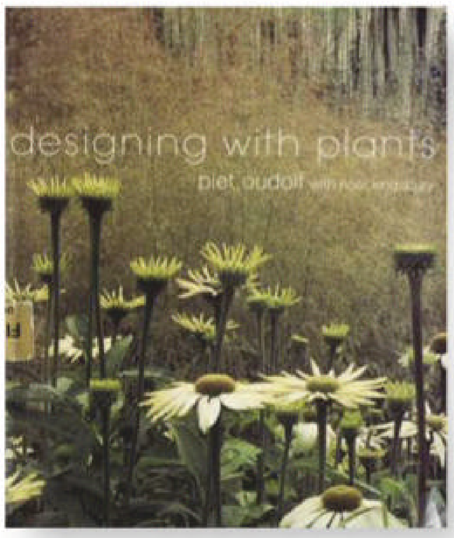

FLORA BRITANNICA
THE CONCISE EDITION
RICHARD MABEY

FLORA BRITANNICA: THE CONCISE EDITION

by Richard Mabey
(Chatto & Windus, 1998)

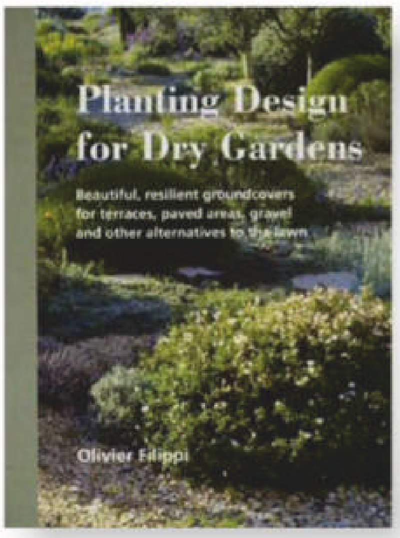
I felt as if this book had been written for me. I'd grown up with *Culpeper's Colour Herbal* and Richard's earlier book *Food For Free* so this was the perfect next step. And it's a page-turner. He seamlessly weaves together the cultural and social history of wild plants, musically linking old wives' tales with hard facts via charming anecdotes to poetry and medicinal use. Ivy-leaved toadflax is a menace in my garden yet I embrace it because of the entry here and we now also call it 'I believe in toadflax'. Undoubtedly the most fascinating book I own.


designing with plants
piet oudolf with noel kingsbury

DESIGNING WITH PLANTS

by Piet Oudolf with Noel Kingsbury
(Conran, 1999)

Piet has written many books and I seem to have almost all of them. I didn't realise. He is so incredibly generous with his knowledge, particularly in print; happily publishing plant lists, analysing photographs and individual schemes and explaining precisely how and why something is done. This book could not be more clearly laid out, describing year-round planting as 'birth, life and death', with the photographs delivering excellent 'flickability'. I find myself referring to these pages when I'm stuck on something and at nearly 20 years old it still seems as fresh as the day it was published.


Planting Design for Dry Gardens
Beautiful, resilient groundcovers for terraces, paved areas, gravel and other alternatives to the lawn
Olivier Filippi

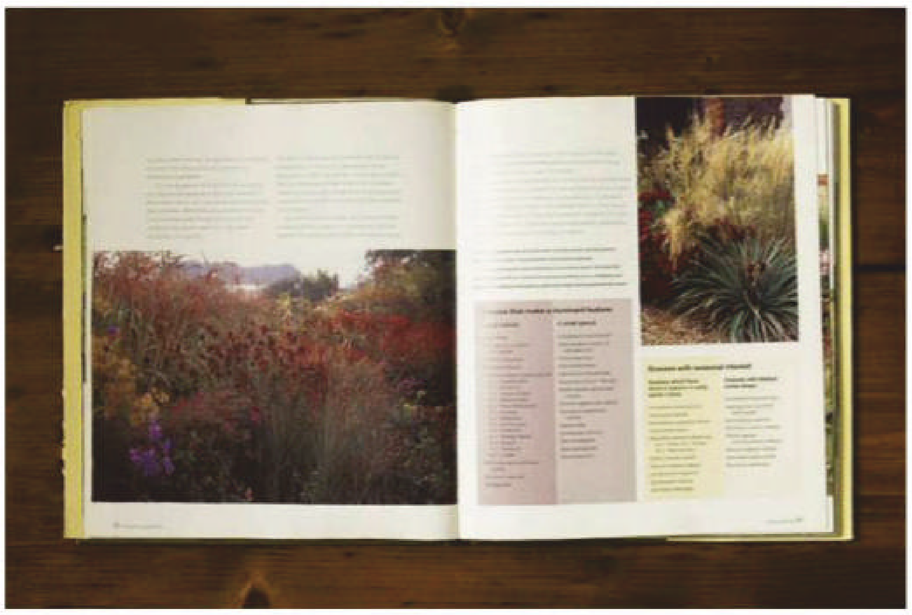
PLANTING DESIGN FOR DRY GARDENS

by Olivier Filippi
(Filbert Press, 2016)

This is a relatively new addition to my library. Having visited his nursery and garden in 2015 I became an Olivier Filippi convert using many of his plants at Chelsea the following year. And with projects underway around the Mediterranean and in the Middle East I have reason to dip into this good-looking book time and again. The influence of the natural landscape and his embracing of xerophytic planting is intoxicating and really hammers home what a sustainable or resilient garden should be. A few minutes with this book and you'll never want to plant a conventional water-thirsty lawn ever again.

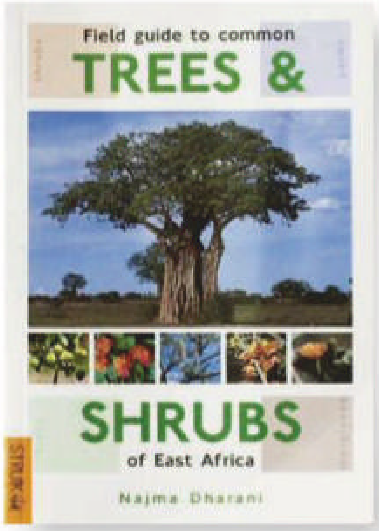
A few minutes with this book and you'll never want to plant a conventional water-thirsty lawn ever again

Flora Britannica.



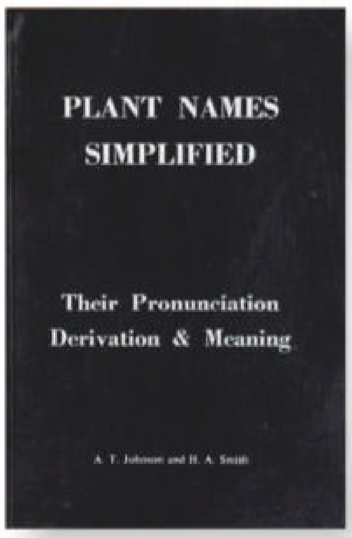
Designing with Plants.

BOOKS SPECIAL



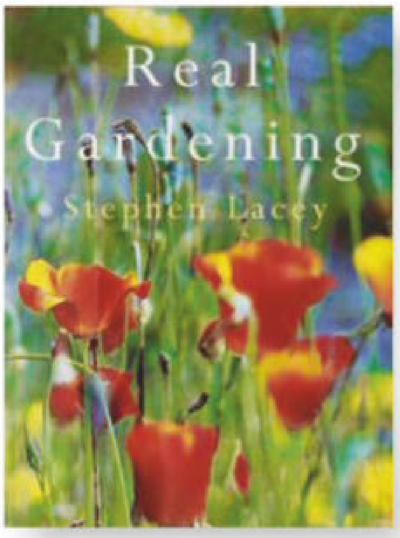
FIELD GUIDE TO COMMON TREES AND SHRUBS OF EAST AFRICA
by Najma Dharani
(Struik Publishers, 2002)

I once spent an entire year in Africa travelling by land and sea often just to lay eyes on some peculiar tree or flower that I had read about. I've also collected seed with Maasai herdsmen for the Millennium Seed Bank, designed a genocide memorial garden in Rwanda and landscaped a small corner of Nairobi. Africa is under my skin but mostly I travel without an expert and there is nothing more frustrating than botanising in front of some fascinating plant while not having a clue what it is. So I never go anywhere without a field guide. I have many, but this one is excellent for ornamentals and isn't too heavy.



PLANT NAMES SIMPLIFIED: THEIR PRONUNCIATION DERIVATION AND MEANING
by AT Johnson and HA Smith
(Landsmans Bookshop, 1972)

By God this book really does what it says on the cover and was something of a Rosetta Stone for me. It unlocked the mysteries of the Linnaean dual name system and catapulted me into a world of botanical understanding. It is one of the first 'gardening' books I owned and there was a time when I referred to it daily to look up every single new plant name I came across. Without having this slim, inexpensive book so early on in my career I think it's highly unlikely I would have either learned or cared so much about plants.



REAL GARDENING
by Stephen Lacey
(Michael Joseph, 2002)

Fortunately Stephen has never shied from an opinion and his writing always makes me chuckle, a skill that more gardening writers could embrace. I reviewed this book when it was published in 2002 and my response was that I wish I had written it myself – and I really meant it. In every paragraph he manages to conjure up a scene so vividly and then dissects it while liberally distributing sound advice. He has allowed me to look at planting in a different way. It is a magical read and occupies that elusive territory where entertainment and information are fused together and perfectly balanced. And it's funny.

> It occupies that elusive territory where entertainment and information are perfectly balanced

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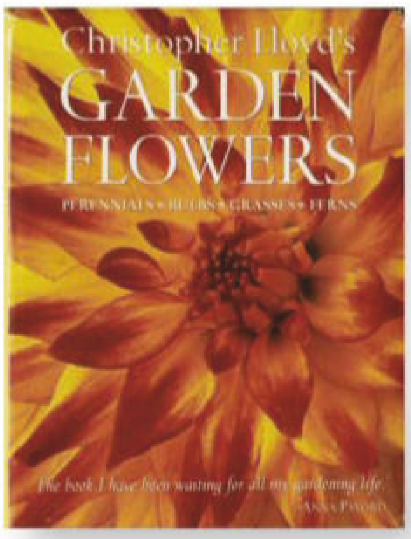
Christopher Lloyd's
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FLOWERS
PERENNIALS • BULBS • GRASSES • FERNS
The book I have been waiting for all my gardening life.
ANNA PAVORD

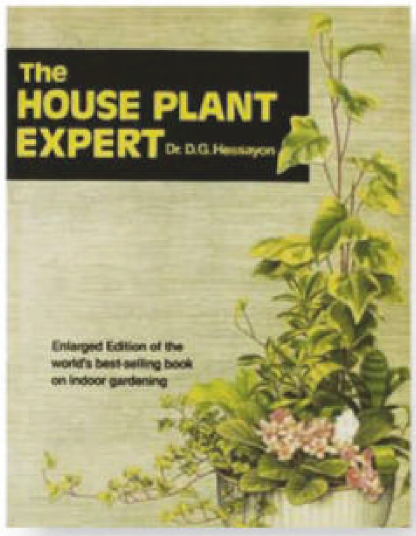
CHRISTOPHER LLOYD'S GARDEN FLOWERS: PERENNIALS, BULBS, GRASSES, FERNS
by Christopher Lloyd
(Cassell & Co, 2000)

With this book you can almost tell what mood Christo was in when writing about certain plants and when you dip into it to look something up you never quite know what you are going to find. *Phlox* gets several pages of praise while *Phlomis russeliana* achieves a mere four lines ending with: 'Not a plant I want to grow – it looks too grubby. But it has presence.' After his death in 2006 I was asked to temporarily fill in for him at the *Guardian*, which was sort of ludicrous given that I had learned so much from his writing in the first place. They were impossible gardening boots to fill.

THE EDUCATION
OF A GARDENER
RUSSELL PAGE

THE EDUCATION OF A GARDENER
by Russell Page
ISBN 0 394 72920
(Penguin, 1985)

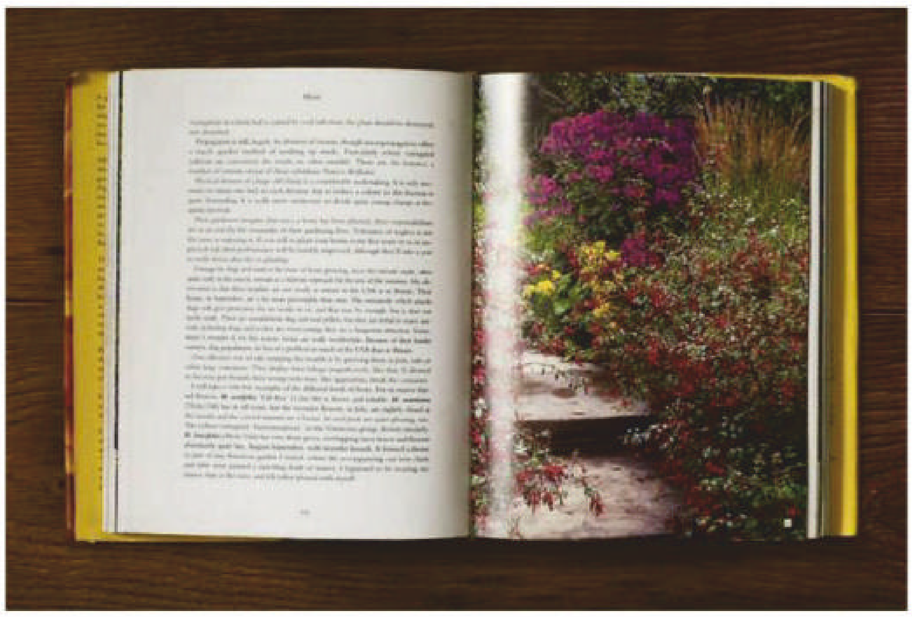
I attempted to read this book early on in my career and simply didn't know what all the fuss was about. But since tucking a few gardens under my own belt I now find it extraordinarily relevant and poignant. Wandering through his life and work, travelling abroad, meeting his clients and hearing his stories is like having a friend and mentor at your shoulder encouraging you along at every step. He explains why something is good and why it works, why certain decisions were made and you are left with what feels like a privileged insight into his mind.


The
HOUSE PLANT
EXPERT
Dr. D.G. Hessayon
Enlarged Edition of the world's best-selling book on indoor gardening

THE HOUSE PLANT EXPERT
by Dr DG Hessayon
(Transworld Publishers Ltd, 1980)

A botanist and soil scientist, Dr Hessayon was working for Baby Bio when he dreamed up the Expert series and promptly became the best selling non-fiction author in the world. Since 1960 this one has sold an amazing 15 million copies. Basic yet brilliant there are just simple drawings, charts and concise words lacking in any fluff whatsoever. The *Guardian* described the look as '1980s East German tourist brochure but without the exuberance'. But the raw information is there at your fingertips, they were the YouTube how-to videos of their day and early on in my career were always my first point of reference.

When you dip into it to look something up you never quite know what you are going to find



Christopher Lloyd's Garden Flowers

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Garden of Medicinal Plants – Chelsea Physic Garden Photo: R Alexander

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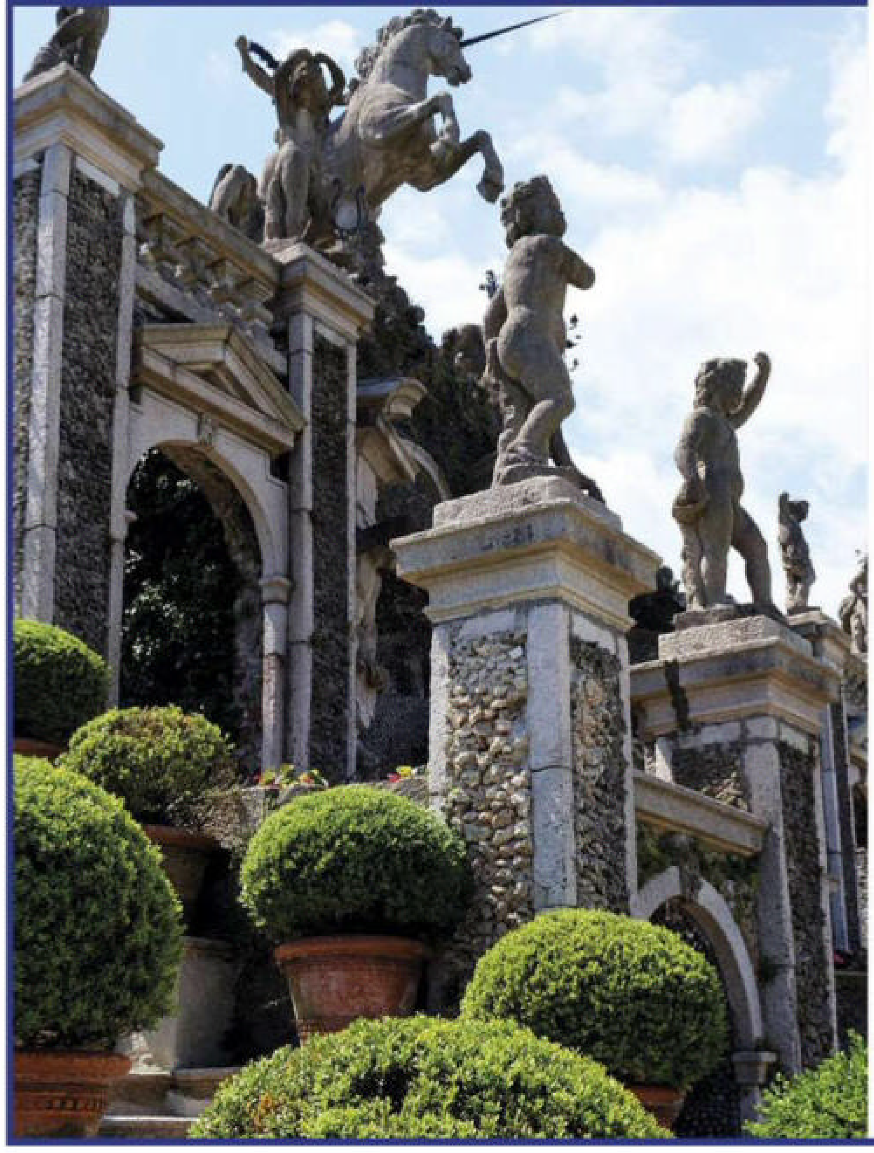

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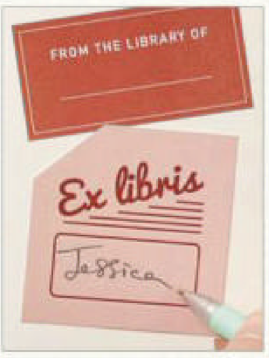
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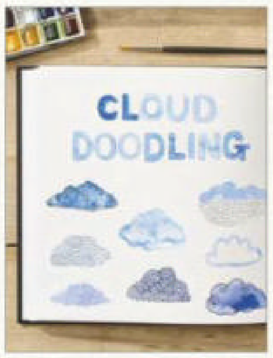
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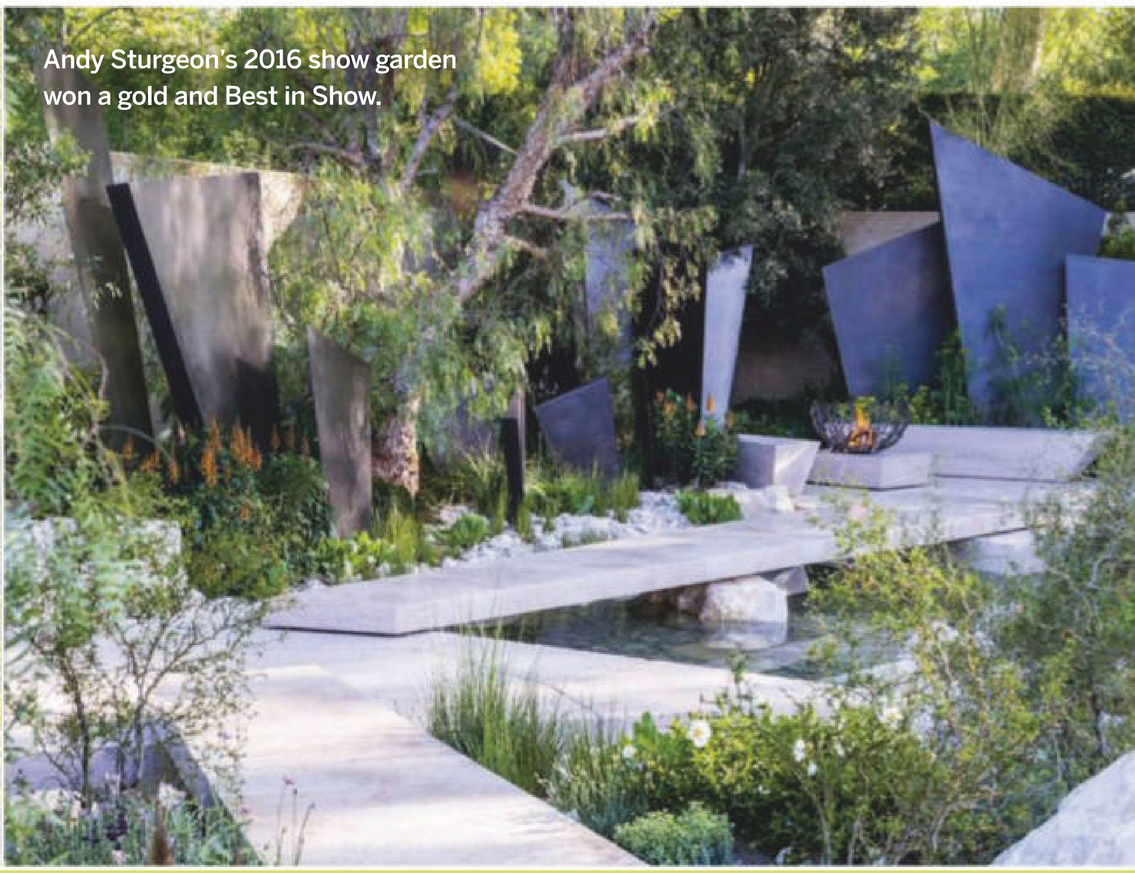
Win a pair of tickets to the RHS Chelsea Flower Show

Main Avenue at RHS Chelsea Flower Show busy with visitors keen to see the gardens.



Andy Sturgeon's 2016 show garden won a gold and Best in Show.

Every May, the horticultural world gathers for the RHS Chelsea Flower Show to showcase the very best in garden design and planting. Top designers create inspirational show gardens, while the Great Pavilion is full of the very best nurserymen and women, ready to pass on their planting knowledge and expertise. Plus you'll find the most stylish garden products and accessories to buy that will make your garden extra special. It's a sell-out event every year, so we are delighted to offer the prize of a pair of tickets to visit the show.

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We have one pair of tickets to give away to the 2019 RHS Chelsea Flower Show on Thursday 23 May 2019. You'll also receive a show guide, *Gardens Illustrated* goodie bag and the opportunity to meet and greet some of the team from show sponsor M&G Investments' garden, this year designed by Andy Sturgeon (see right).
For more details about the show go to **rhs.org.uk**

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ANDY STURGEON'S 2019 GARDEN FOR M&G INVESTMENTS

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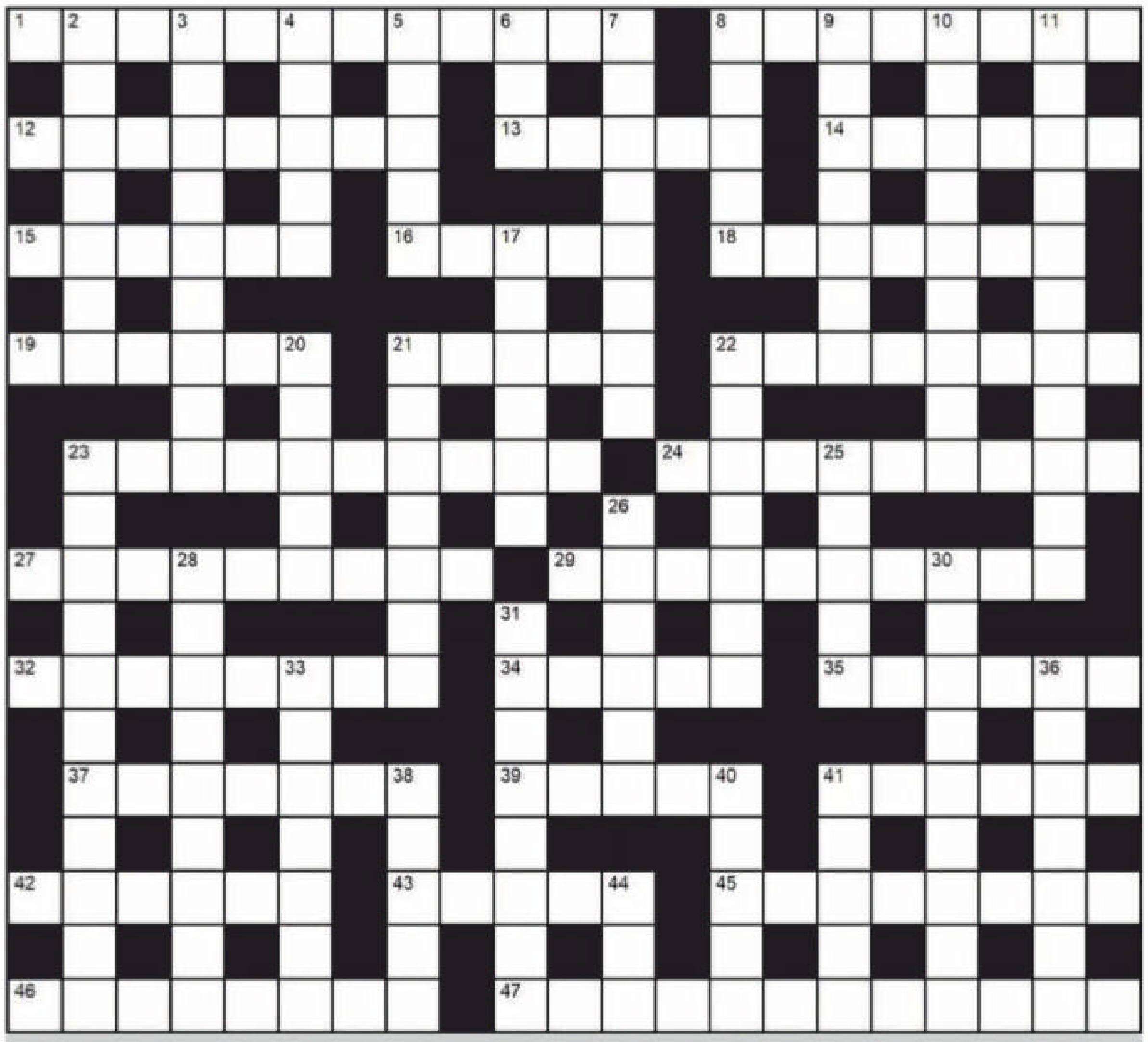

ACROSS

1 Common name for a *Nicotiana* – 'smoke bush'? (7,5)
8 Tuberous flowering plants of Primrose family eg species *coum* (8)
12 Hears about the… *Calluna vulgaris* plants (8)
13 A brown-leaved, white-flowering *Heuchera* provides a coffee drink (5)
14 Fleshy spike of flowers… paid off in extremes of Sussex (6)
15 Genus of flowering cherry, plum, etc (6)
16 The mulberry genus could produce rum so (5)
18 Genus of scabious-like plants – sounds more mischievous (7)
19 Flowering plant, genus *Rubia*, with red roots – dam' red oddly! (6)
21 Iris with inky-purple flowers – bales all over the place! (5)
22 Some sole 'ace' *Aeonium* includes the olive family (8)
23 *Viola tricolor*'s common name – for peace of mind? (6,4)
24 Common name for broom *Genista aetnensis* – 'Volcano' (5,4)
27 Perennial umbellifer masterwort … is a tartan variety (9)
29 Genus of tropical 'air plants' – laid in last arrangement (10)
32 Containing only cultivated plants (8)
34 Fragrance… part of reversed marjoram or agrimony (5)
35 Keeps a supply of scented flowers of *Matthiola* genus? (6)
37/39 Common name for eg *Osteospermum* (7,5)
41 Campanula with star-shaped flowers – all set to change (6)
42 Female part of flower that collects pollen (6)
43 Eg Virginia creeper and woodbine (5)
45 One who fancies a Peter Beales flower, say (8)
46 Tree with tulip or star-shaped flowers – makes animal go crazy! (8)
47 Type of orchid – worn by titled female? (5,7)

DOWN

2 The daisy bush genus – produced by devastated oil area (7)
3 Woody, twining plant, eg ___ *kolomikta* or ___ *deliciosa* (kiwi fruit) (9)
4 Cruciferous plant, associated with garden, land or water (5)
5 The garden pea genus – part of top is umbelliferous (5)
6 In short, it's an RHS seal of approval (3)
7 Common name for *Coreopsis* – check mark potential plant (8)
8 William, 19th-century planthunter has genus of annuals (sometimes called godetia) named after him (5)
9 A *Ceanothus* with arching branches, like a waterfall (7)
10 Genus of plants aka giant hyssop – as each tag varied (9)
11 Latin name for red-flowering winter heath – arcane acer I developed (5,6)
17 Strong and sturdy (6)
20 National Centre for Organic Gardening – quite correct, we hear! (5)
21 Unable to produce eg fruit (7)
22 In Tresco, no clear genus of deciduous ferns (7)
23 Genus of African plant aka flag lily – unusual anther shape (11)
25 Latin term meaning 'dwarf' – Linnaeus altered, no lie! (5)
26 Famous leisure gardens in central Copenhagen (6)
28 A persicaria with dark maroon leaves – symbolic of Wales? (3,6)
30 Succulent in *Sedum* and *Hylotelephium* genera – or NT copse adapted (9)
31 Church dignitary's red osier dogwood? (8)
33 Small-cupped narcissus with orange cup – tiny islet 300 miles west of Scotland (7)
36 Snowdrop with green markings at the tip named after an Irish county (7)
38 Word indicating a plant is white-flowering – a vine, possibly (5)
40 Rambling stories of fibres made from eg moso bamboo (5)
41 Agave whose leaves yield a fibre for rope (5)
44 In short, Kew's Seed Information Database is in Arnside (3)

SOLUTIONS TO THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD WILL BE PRINTED NEXT MONTH

SOLUTIONS TO DECEMBER'S CROSSWORD

ACROSS 7 Star of Bethlehem **10** Lot **12** Rimed **13** Apple **14** Darmera **15** Garland **17** Layer **18** Alder **20** Actinidia **21** Hellebore **23** Carol **25** Rubus **27** Juniper **29** Arbutus **31** Grain **32** Erato **34** Wolfsbane **36** Balearica **38** Sheds **40** Rodeo **42** Berries **44** Mugwort **46** Basil **47** Noble **49** Nut **50** Christmas cactus.
DOWN 1 Palm **2** Nordmann **3** Stapelia **4** Sleepy **5** Umbria **6/30** Blue Belle **7** Sprig **8** Bearded iris **9** Hederal **11** Tea Tree **16** Rotor **19** Droop **20** Alcea **21** Hosta **22** Ernie **24** Lotus **26** Bugle **27** Jingle Bells **28** Rioja **33** Alibi **34** Wiseman **35** Aerator **36** Blossoms **37** Aurinia **39** Scotch **41** Debase **43** Stems **45** Gate **48** Beth.

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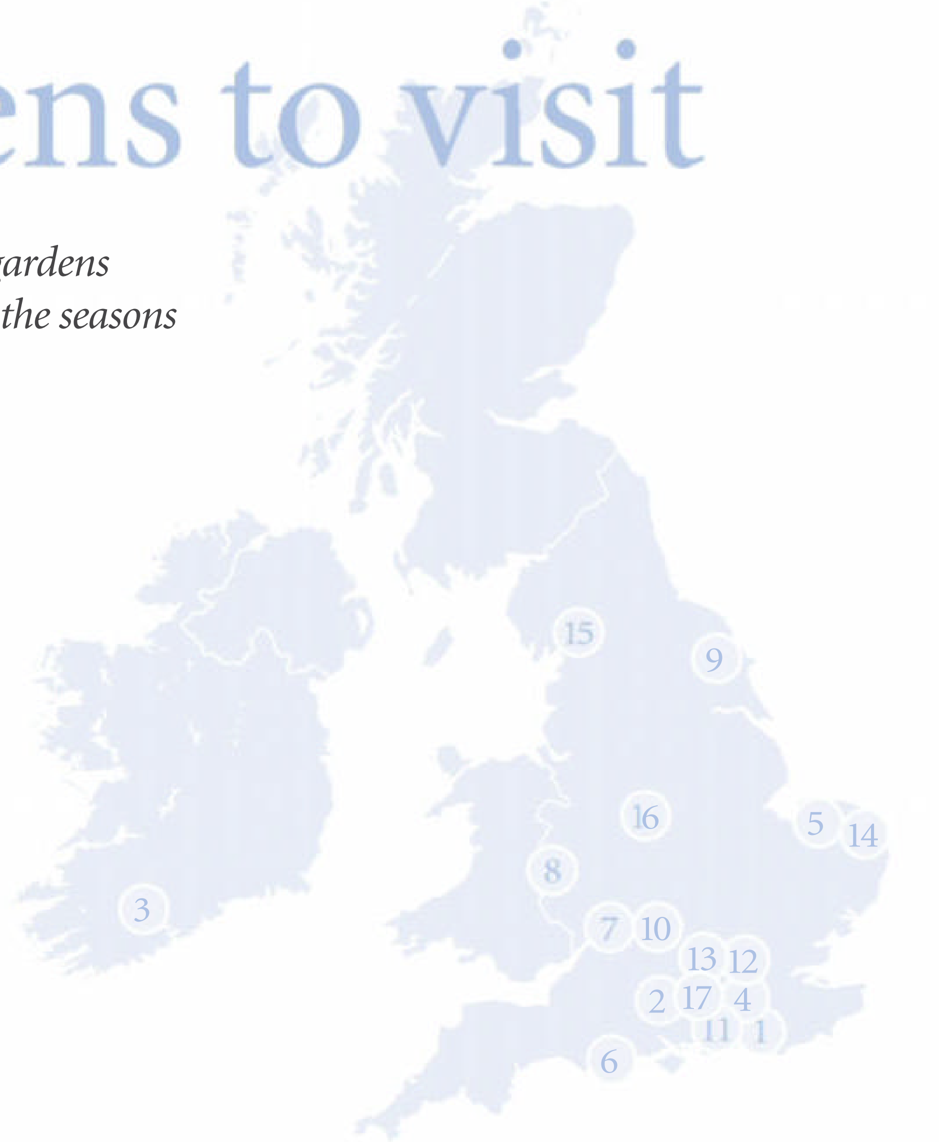
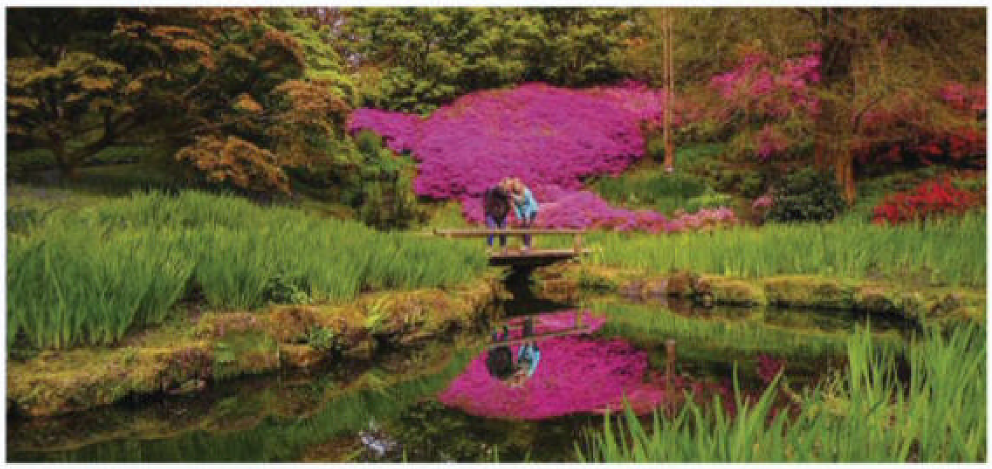
New year gardens to visit

This new year, make a resolution to visit our collection of stunning gardens and arboretums from across the UK and Ireland. Watch the turn of the seasons through their beautifully changing flora and fauna.





1 WAKEHURST

Kew's wild botanic garden in Sussex, has more than 500 acres of ornamental gardens, woodlands and nature reserves. Beautiful whatever the season, the gardens are internationally significant for collections, scientific research and conservation. You can also visit Kew's unique Millennium Seed Bank, where science and horticulture work side by side. **kew.org/wakehurst | 01444 894066**

2 GILBERT WHITE & THE OATES COLLECTIONS

Gilbert White, the 18th-century writer and naturalist was a keen gardener. At his home in Selborne see his 25-acre garden recreated, with historical plants and White's quirky details. The garden is attached to a wonderful museum, shop and café, where you can buy and taste plants and produce from the garden.

Selborne, Hampshire GU34 3JH | gilbertwhiteshouse.org.uk

3 BLARNEY CASTLE

Blarney Castle and Gardens are Ireland's most visited garden. The 60 acres of gardens are a joy to explore. Visit the prehistoric Fern Garden, the deadly Poison Garden, and the magical Rock Close. Stroll by the lake, riverside and woodlands or through the arboretums and herbaceous borders. Café and shops on site.

Blarney, Co. Cork, Ireland | blarneycastle.ie

Photo: National Trust/Andrew Honour

4 NATIONAL TRUST NYMANS

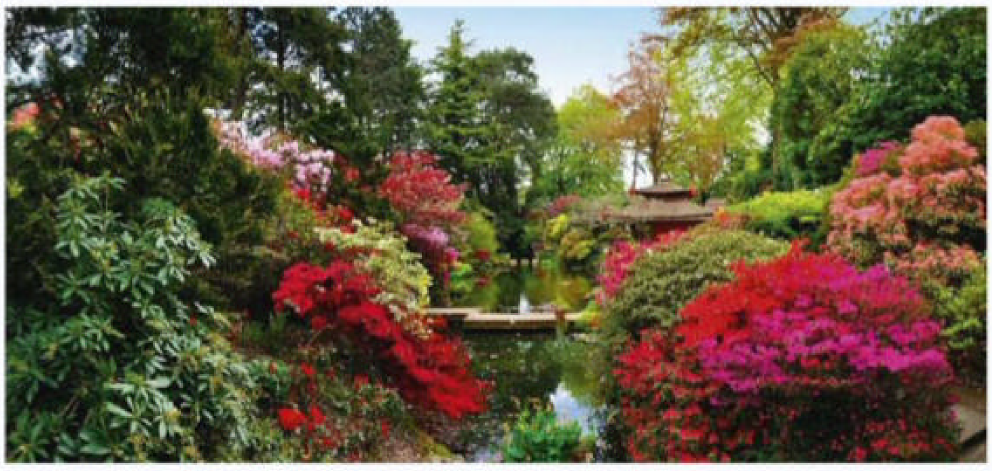
Nymans showcases year-round colour with rare and unusual plant collections of national significance. Stunning collection of subtly fragranced magnolias in spring. The Rose Garden is scented by hints of old fashioned roses and in autumn dramatic shows of native tree colour can be seen in the adjoining woodland.

Handcross, West Sussex RH17 6EB | nationaltrust.org.uk/nymans

5 HOUGHTON HALL & GARDENS

A beautiful Palladian mansion, built for Britain's first prime minister. Award-winning five-acre walled garden, contemporary sculptures by world-renowned artists, model soldier museum. Café, gift shop and children's play area. Under 17 years free. Groups welcome.

Near King's Lynn, Norfolk PE31 6TY | 01485 528569 | houghtonhall.com



6 COMPTON ACRES

A 1920s Arts and Crafts style garden on the Dorset coast featuring five distinct areas. A colourful Italianate Garden, an extensive Rock and Water Garden, a Wooded Valley featuring rhododendrons and camellias, a rocky hillside Heather Garden and an authentic Japanese Garden. Truly a garden for all seasons.

Poole, Dorset BH13 7ES | 01202 700778 | comptonacres.co.uk

7 PAINSWICK ROCOCO GARDEN

Designed in the 1740s as a flamboyant pleasure garden for holding intimate garden parties, this hidden valley is now the country’s only surviving complete rococo garden. Years of restoration work have saved it from a woodland wilderness and it is now a stunning place to escape the busy world.

Painswick, Gloucestershire GL6 6TH | 01452 813204 | rococogarden.org.uk

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Ridgebourne Road, Kington HR5 3EG | 01544 230160 | hergest.co.uk

9 SCAMPSTON WALLED GARDEN

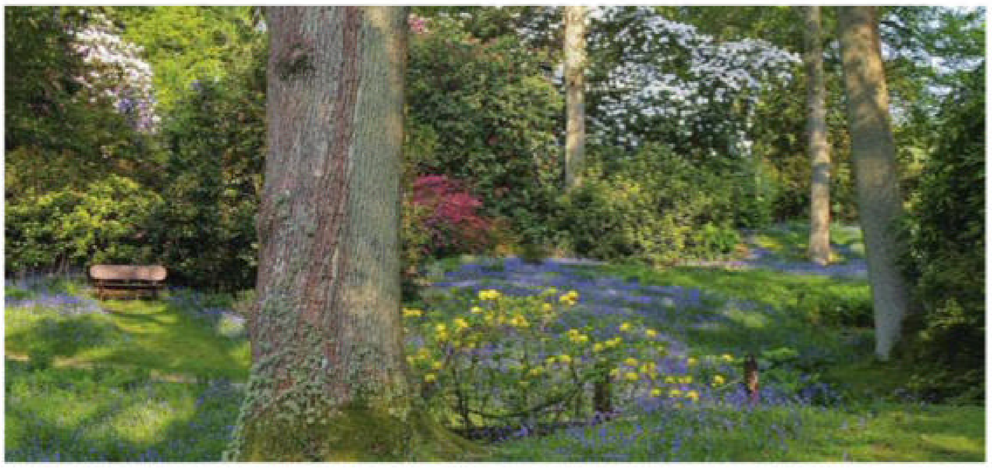
Set within the walls of the 18th-century kitchen garden of Scampston Hall, Scampston Walled Garden is a stunningly beautiful contemporary garden. Designed by the renowned Dutch designer, Piet Oudolf, the garden is alive with clever contrasts and colour throughout the seasons.

Malton, North Yorkshire YO17 8NG | 01944 759111 | scampston.co.uk

10 BUSCOT PARK

The gardens and grounds at Buscot Park were designed in the late 18th century to complement the Georgian house. They were enhanced in the 20th century by the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Lords Faringdon and include the spectacular water garden designed by Harold Peto and the Four Seasons Walled Garden.

Faringdon, Oxfordshire SN7 8BU | 01367 240932 | buscotpark.com



11 HIGH BEECHES WOODLAND & WATER GARDEN

Twenty seven acres of the Sussex Weald have been have been sensitively planted with rare trees and shrubs to create a unique woodland and water garden. In early summer the bluebell-carpeted glades are filled with the beauty and scent of many azaleas, and autumn brings a spectacular display of colour.

Handcross, West Sussex RH17 6HQ | 01444 400589 | highbeeches.com

12 SYON HOUSE & GARDENS

Close to Heathrow is Syon Park, the London home of the Duke of Northumberland. The magnificent house and gardens are set in 200 acres of parkland and 'Capability' Brown-designed gardens, which includes the Great Conservatory, lakes, restaurant, an indoor adventure playground and gift shop.

Brentford, Middlesex TW8 8JF | 020 8560 0882 | syonpark.co.uk

13 A GARDEN WITH A ROYAL COLLECTION

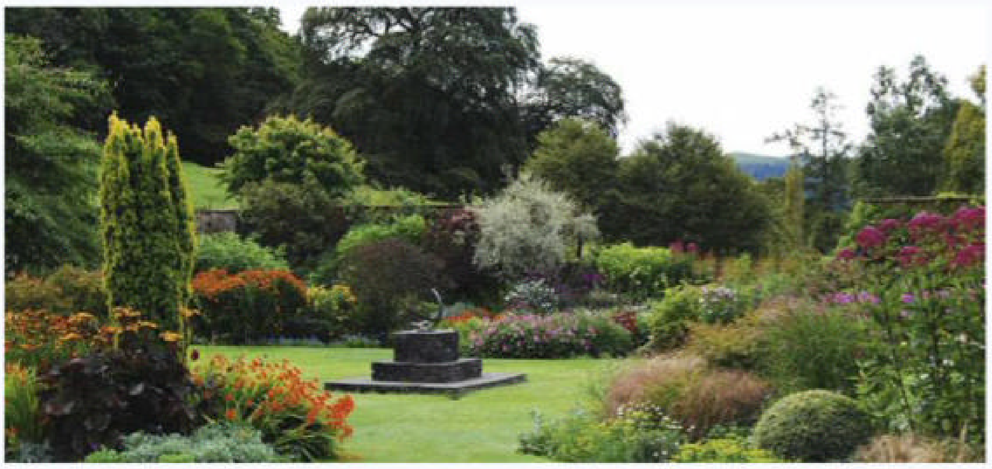
The Savill Garden is a hidden gem in the heart of Windsor Great Park. Connect with decades of royal history and admire the abundant variety of rare flowers and plants. Since its creation in the 1930s, the garden has been an inspiration for all and a vision of gardening excellence. Visit all year round.

Englefield Green, Surrey TW20 OUJ | windsorgreatpark.co.uk/savillgarden

14 HINDRINGHAM HALL GARDENS

Hindringham Hall is the most delicious little manor with its medieval moat and fish ponds, working walled vegetable garden, formal and informal borders wrapped around a brick and flint Tudor Hall. Open to visitors twice a week between April and October and free to guests in the two holiday cottages.

Hindringham, Norfolk NR210QA | 01328 878226 | hindringhamhall.org



15 HOLEHIRD GARDENS

Set on a hillside with views across the lake to the fells beyond, Holehird Gardens delights visitors all year round. Extending to 12 acres, the gardens are unique in being run entirely by volunteers, members of the Lakeland Horticultural Society who in 2019 celebrate 50 years of the Society's existence.

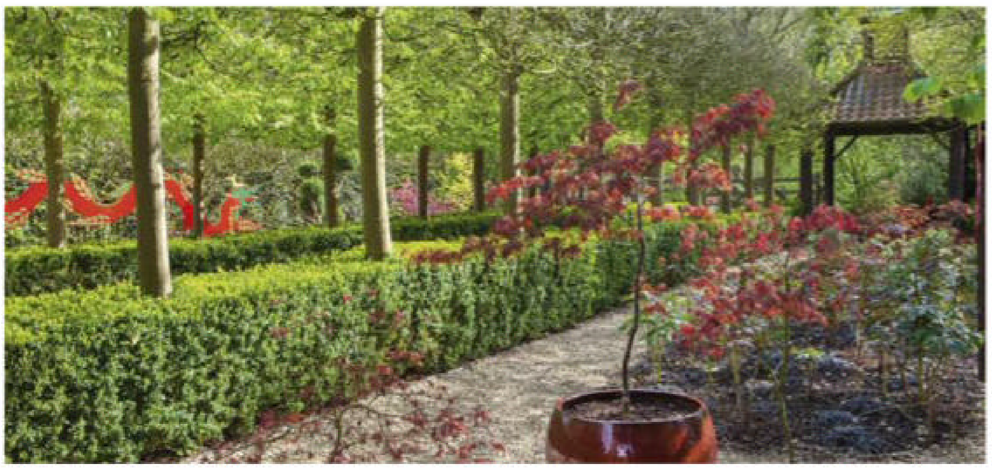
Windermere LA23 1NP | 01539 446008 | holehirdgardens.org.uk

Photo: Clive Nichols

16 MORTON HALL GARDENS

A fritillary meadow of outstanding beauty complemented by majestic woodland gardens; intricate tulip displays followed by brimming summer borders in perfect colour schemes and breath-taking views over unspoilt Worcestershire countryside. Open from April to September by appointment.

Worcestershire B96 6SJ | 01386 791820 | mortonhallgardens.co.uk



17 WEST GREEN HOUSE

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Thackham's Ln, Hook RG27 8JB | 01252 844611 | westgreenhouse.co.uk

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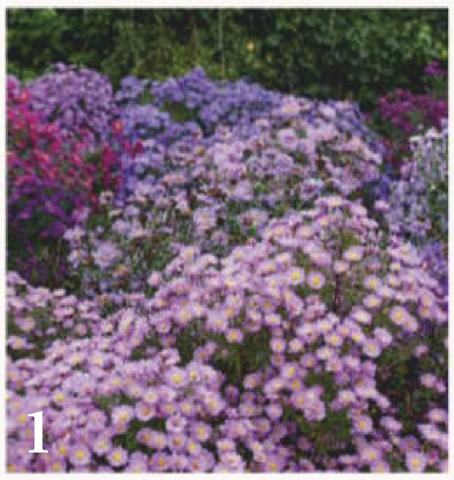

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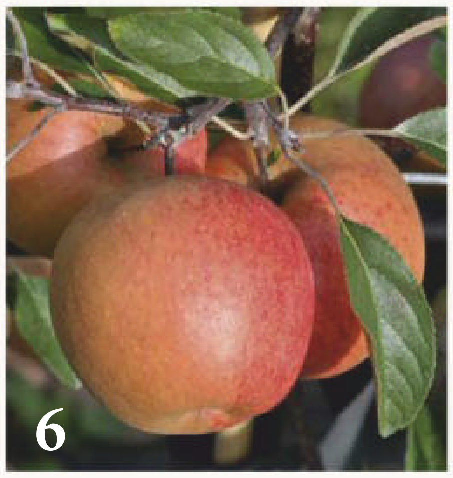

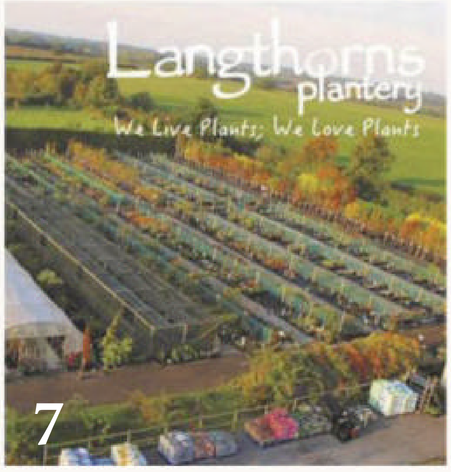

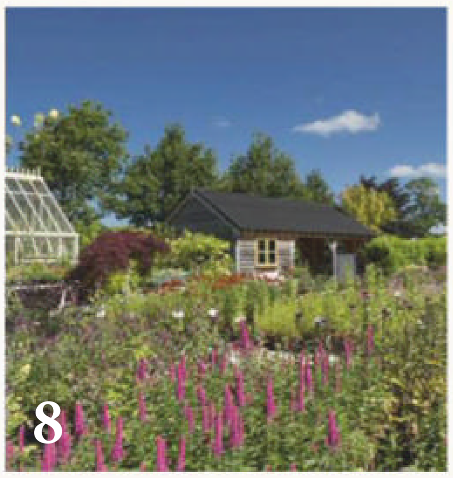

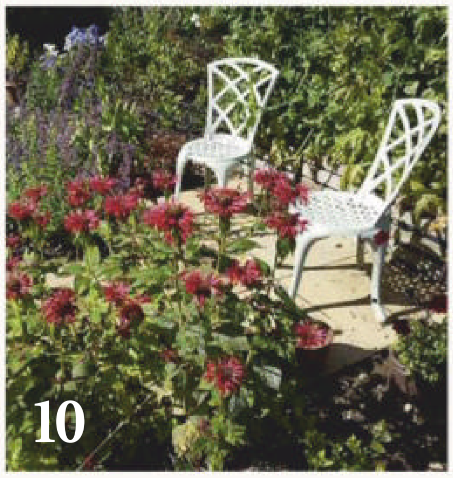

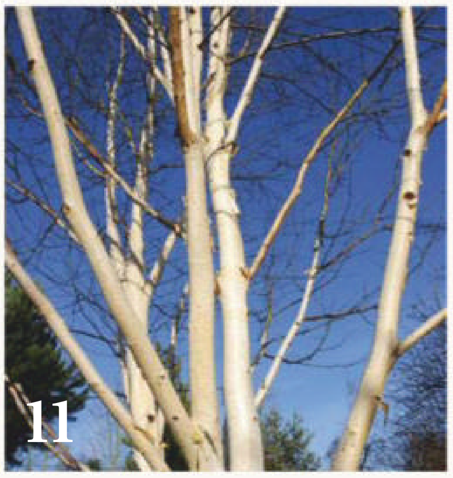

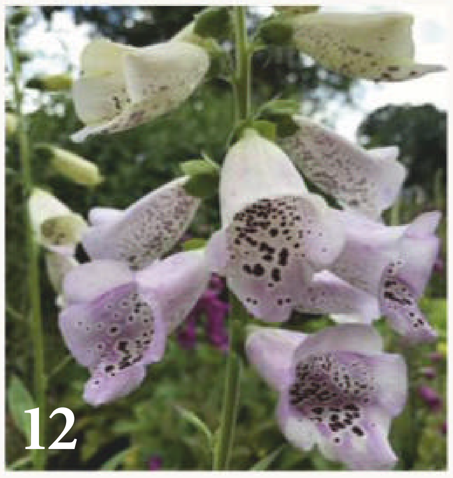

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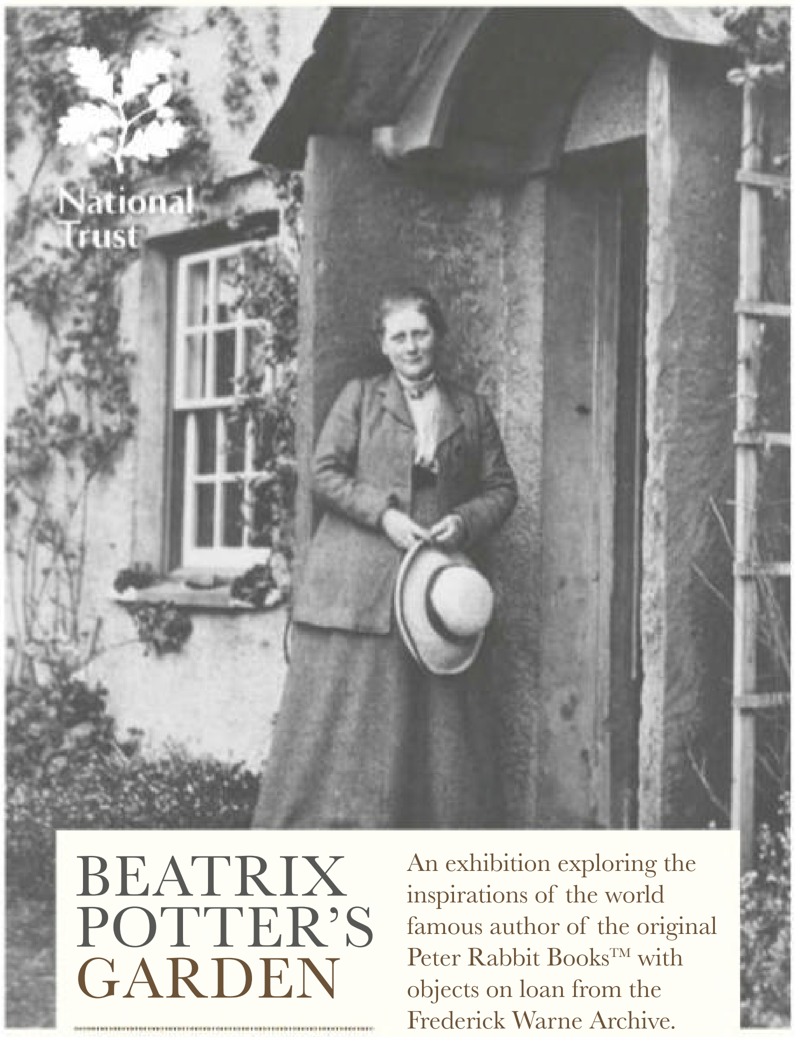

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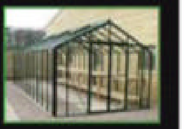

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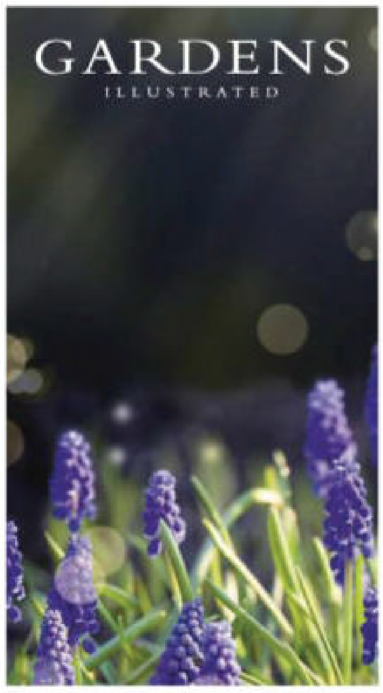

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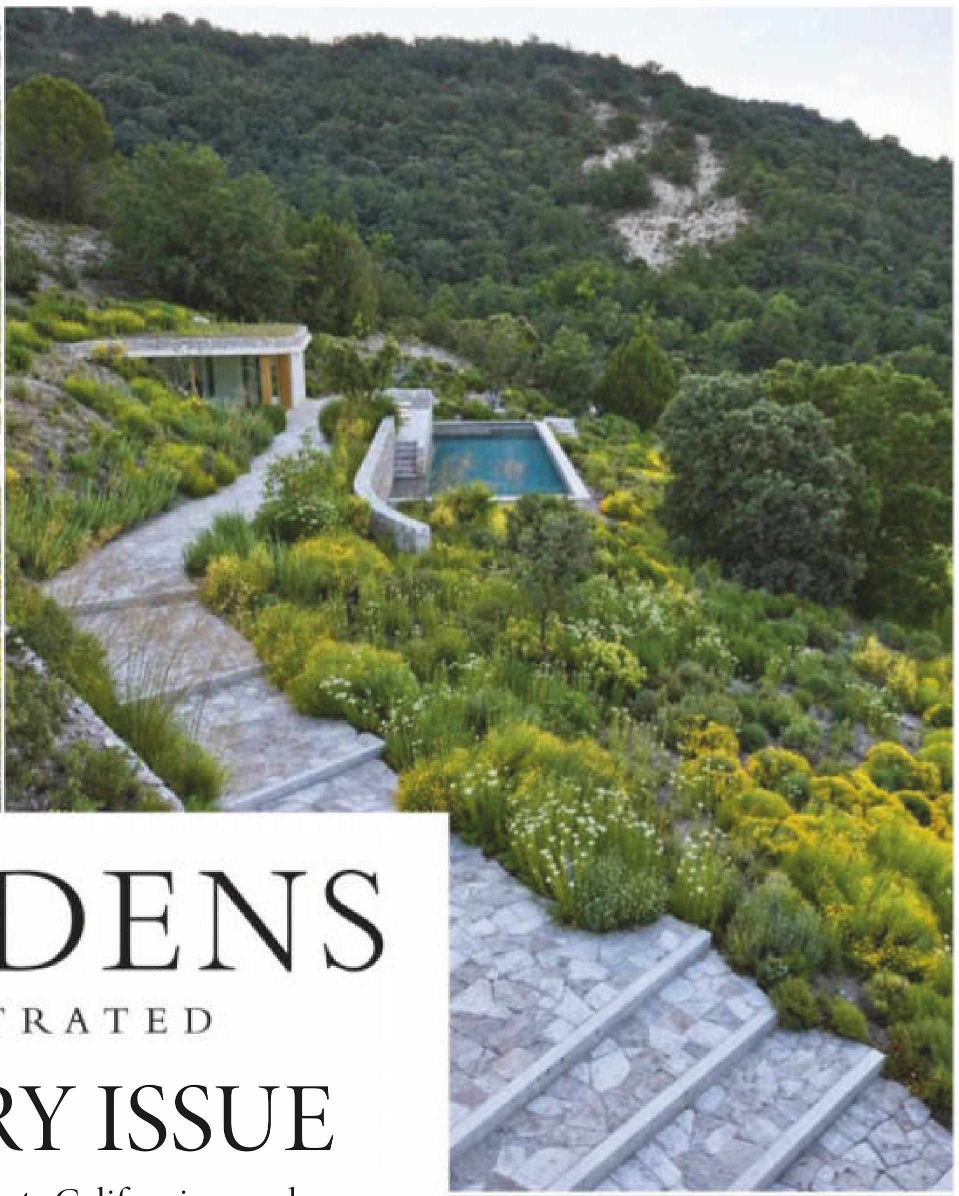

GARDENS
ILLUSTRATED

JANUARY ISSUE

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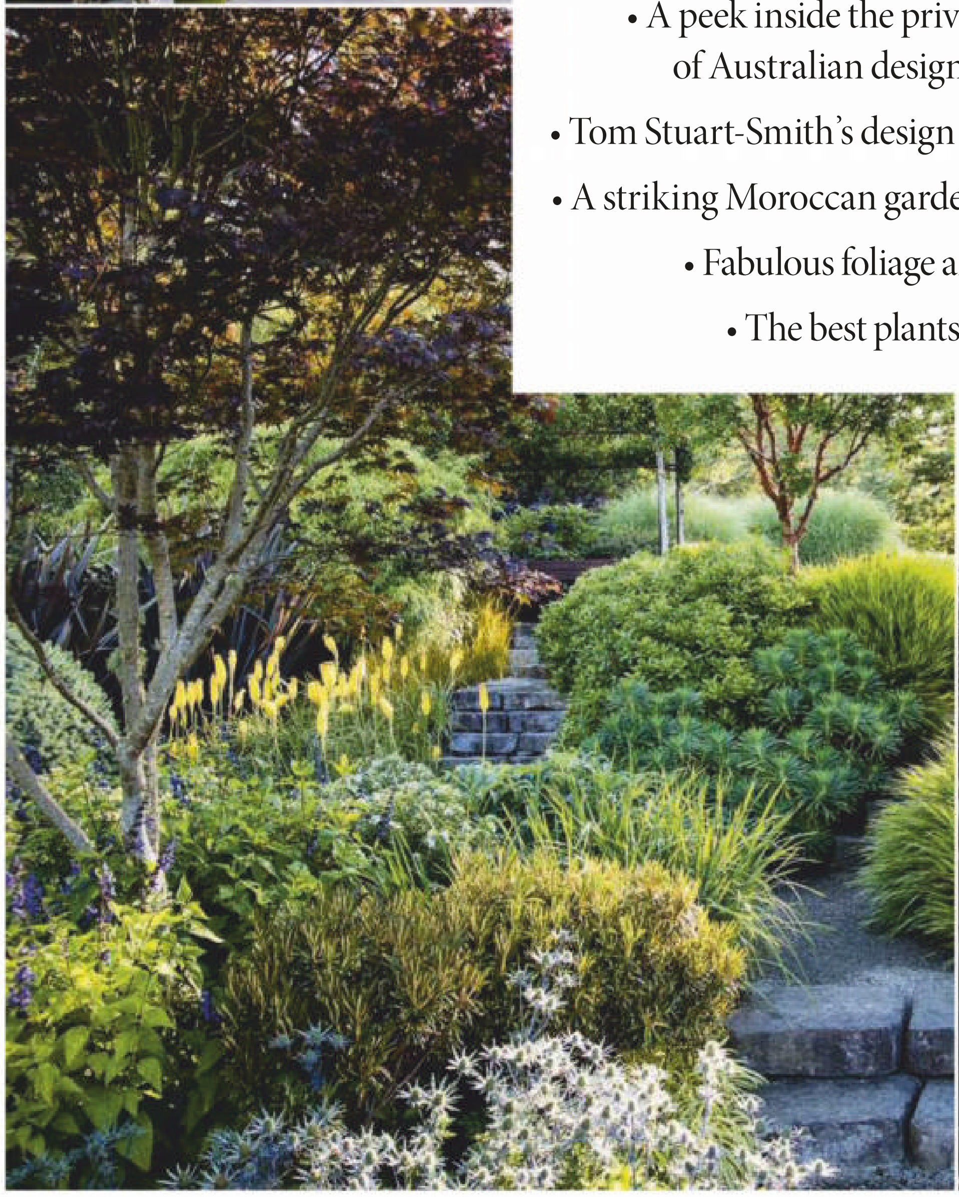

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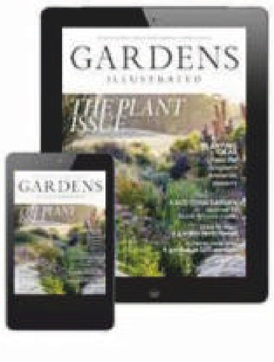

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FOR BETTER OR WORSE

In meditative mood, Frank contemplates the extent to which his identity is tied to his garden, and how plants fall in and out of favour, evoking memories good and bad

WORDS FRANK RONAN ILLUSTRATION SANAE SUGIMOTO

Clearing out dead ceanothus leaves along the wall cap at the back of the terrace, I came across a wooden dish planted with auriculas. It was a present from someone about five years ago and put there as a temporary decoration when the ceanothus was small. Never having had much luck with auriculas, the arrangement was not expected to last. But, in neglected obscurity, which was obviously the auricula trick I was missing all along, last it did, and the ceanothus grew round and over it and it became a nice annual surprise. Nice until the giver committed one of those commonplace betrayals that demonstrated she should never have been a friend in the first place. The unsuspecting auriculas became a painful reminder, mostly of my own stupidity in trusting such a person.

THE GARDEN IS A CLAMOUR OF VOICES STUCK IN THE MEMORY; THE CACOPHONY CAN BE OVERWHELMING

We should be able to rise above such things and not saddle innocent plants with our emotions. I did my best to remain logical, but still had to avert my eyes from that corner when the auriculas were in flower. That was ridiculous. They had to go.

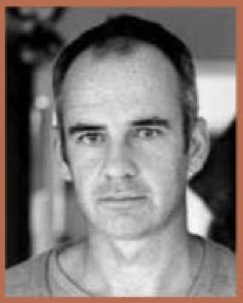
We like to think of our gardens as meritocracies; that every plant is there for what it contributes, and that we are a pure, aesthetic creature drifting from sight to smell in a haze of self-congratulation. Perhaps it is that way for some, but I am a person of narrative and story and provenance. It begins with knowing where a plant is from and who, from our age of horticulture, first noticed it there. Then there is who gave it to you or where you collected it or who told you about it or in whose garden you first focused on it.

Already the poor thing is laden with meaning by the time you let it loose between your fences. That is the geranium that I smuggled through French customs for my grandmother, and those are the stone pines from a cone I stole at Kew the day I broke up with the person who introduced me to my husband, and here are the hellebores all descended from an exquisite given by one great gardener to another, who rejected it for being too black (and this was long before hellebores were really black), and passed it on to me.

The garden is a clamour of voices stuck in the memory, sometimes just reciting their opinion of the plant before you (particularly if it was an opinion you had the courage to disagree with and have been proved right since), sometimes just saying the thing they said when you were both looking at it. Sometimes it is only your own voice rethinking the thing you thought when you were last weeding round it. The ghostly cacophony can be overwhelming at times.

Because, fight it all you might, plants are also what they represent through no fault of their own. I still remember my fury on the morning after the US presidential election of 2000, and having to restrain myself from rushing out and destroying every plant of American origin in the garden. And now how those trilliums make me laugh every year: that anyone could have thought then that that was the worst thing that could happen.

I seized the bowl. It was not a noise in my head I wanted to hear again, or one that I honestly think I will be able to laugh at one day. And then, what? Auriculas to compost, bowl to kindling would have been the logical decision. But I am still not one who could easily destroy a viable plant purely for my own satisfaction. It is not the fault of the auriculas that I never want to look on them again. I found myself walking towards the rubbish heap at the back, thinking it could be over quickly with a flick of the wrist. Then I saw the worst part of the hedge, mostly hazel and bramble and shaded by spindly geans, and thrust it in there, where it can take its chances, unnoticed. ◻



Frank Ronan is a novelist who lives and gardens in Worcestershire.

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